

However, this directive also clearly shows that the High Command of the Wehrmacht correctly assessed the dangerous situation created by the Balkan campaign and the possibilities that could arise for Stalin from it. Point 4) of Keitel's above-mentioned instruction (Document V.52) proves that, due to the perceived increasing danger from the East, the fears of the High Command of the Wehrmacht that the Red Army might succeed in anticipating its own attack had increased and that Keitel considered it necessary to refer once again to the defensive measures already ordered in this case. Cf. the window of opportunity favorable to the Red Army (sketch V.44). The following instruction (Document V.53) of the High Command of Army Group B of 03 April 1941 also proves these serious fears despite the indication mentioned in the instruction that offensive actions of the Russian were considered unlikely. Apparently, "nervousness and disturbances of the other run-up" were to be prevented. The stipulations made "...to defend the immediate border area against any attack," focal points "To secure against surprise enemy advances ...and permission to continue to advance forces," attest to the perceived threat posed by the Red Army. After an extensive report on the situation in Yugoslavia, Colonel Kinzel reported a situation report Russia on 04 April 1941, which Halder recorded as follows: Quote V.54 "Situation Report Russia: Abteilung Fremde Heere Ost now admits that the strength of the Russian Army in European Russia is to be assumed to be stronger than hitherto supposed. (The Finns and the Japanese had always maintained this.) The total is now estimated at 171 div. 36 cav. Div. and 40 mot. mech. brigades. The newly formed armored corps of 3 divisions is apparently around Leningrad." 86 This report thus confirmed a Red Army strength in the European part of the Soviet Union of 2Z1 computational divisions. The very use of the phrase "Abteilung Fremde Heere Ost now admits, ..." "proves that Halder already had information, certainly from another source, about the increase in Red Army strength to this level, but also that Fremde Heere Ost could not always account for the rapidly developing Red Army strength in March/April 1941. However, only one armored corps, the 1st Mechanized Corps of the Leningrad Military District in the Pskov area (902 tanks), was reported, although eight mechanized corps had been fully operational since 01 October 1940, a ninth was to have been established in the Kiev Special Military District according to Stalin's directive of 05 October 1940, and, according to the decision on the mobilization plan of 12 February 1941, the covered establishment of another 21 mechanized corps had begun at a rapid pace. After all, according to this formulation (quotation V.54), it was recognized that the Panzer Corps (meaning the Mechanized Corps) of the Red Army had three divisions in its inventory. On 06 April 1941, Halder stated in a meeting with the Commander-in-Chief of the Army: citation V.55 \_\_\_\_\_ "Russian outline: conspicuous crowding in the Ukraine. An attack against Hungary and Bukovina would not be impossible. However, I consider it completely improbable." 87 86 Halder: War Diary, Part II, p. 351. 87 Halder: Kriegstagebuch, Part II, p. 351. and on 07 April 1941: Quote V.56 "The Russian outline gives rise to thought: if one gets rid of the catchphrase that the Russian wants peace and will not attack of his own accord, then one must admit that the Russian outline very well makes possible a rapid transition to attack, which could become extraordinarily inconvenient for us." "Talk with Jodi (OKW): on questionable attitude of Russia. Should the maximum power schedule be introduced? After decision of the Fuehrer, answer is given: No, but all measures of defense can be taken openly." 88 These above quotations prove that the situation in the East was constantly assessed in the high commands of the Wehrmacht and the Wehrmacht units, despite the tense situation of the Balkan campaign that had begun, and that the increasing danger was recognized. Despite these alarming reports, which reinforced the need for an advance strike against this increasingly dangerous massing of the Red Army in the western military districts, extraordinary problems arose for Barbarossa as a result of the withdrawal of forces for the Balkan operation. Of the 21 divisions planned as Army High Command reserves, 12 divisions (including 5 mobile divisions from the west) remained for Barbarossa. Following a report by Generalfeldmarschall

List that he intended to move with the 12th Army on 06 April 1941 to conduct the Balkan campaign, the Führer's decision, as suggested by Halder, was to set the start of the attack for Barbarossa for 25 June 1941. Assuming that the rapid formations could be withdrawn by 30 April 1941, a time calculation of 10 days for the required march back to the refresher areas and 3 weeks for the conduct of the refreshment indicated that the 4th wave of the campaign could be scheduled for about 20 May to 20 June 1941.<sup>89</sup> Despite much available reconnaissance information and a number of notable reports, such as that of 08 April 1940, "Families of Russian Trade Representation Leave Berlin,"<sup>90</sup> Halder, in a note of a conversation between the Commander in Chief of the Army and Hitler on 10 April 1941, stated, "4th Russia: no concern."<sup>91</sup> In view of Halder's above-mentioned findings about the ever more obvious threat from the east (citations V.55 and V.56) and taking into account the intervening Balkan campaign, this remark by Hitler can only mean that, despite the postponement of the date, it was still possible for Barbarossa to anticipate a Red Army offensive. As the following directive of Army Group B of 10 April 1941 proves, the forced conduct of the Balkan campaign resulted in drastic changes in the organization of the forces of the army and tank groups. Last but not least, the formulation contained in paragraph 3) of the directive of Army Group B "It remains in the supply of forces as long as the attitude of Russia does not force other measures ..." proves the doubts existing in the Wehrmacht leadership that, despite the delay caused by the Balkan campaign and the reorganization of forces that had become necessary, it could still succeed in anticipating the blow of the Red Army. This conviction of the necessity of a military strike against the Soviet Union was also confirmed by a report from Panzergruppe v. Kleist, whose assault team in the hastily abandoned Russian legation building in Belgrade on April 13, 1941, fell into the hands of compromising documents, including a file with the following text: Quote V.58 "The USSR will react at the appropriate moment. The Axis powers have largely bogged down their forces and therefore the USSR will suddenly strike against them."<sup>92</sup> On April 14, 1941, Halder recorded in the war diary, "Nonaggression pact Russia-Japan for 5 years."<sup>93</sup> This statement of Halder's, made without any comment, reflects the surprise in the Army High Command that Stalin's conclusion of this pact with Japan had caused. It should have been clear to the experienced chief of the Army General Staff, however, that this pact released substantial portions of the Far East forces and would result in a further massing of Red Army troops in the western military districts of the Soviet Union. The report of the military attaché from Tokyo of 02 January 1941 (Document IV.26, Table IV29.) concerning the strength of the Red Army in the Far East, with 1,000 tanks and more than 1,000 aircraft, was known to him with certainty. 08 April 1941 Report of the Eastern Eavesdropping Forces on the Land Forces of the Red Army A report of current reconnaissance results of the Eastern Eavesdropping Forces as of 01 April 1941 was made on 08 April 1941. The above, above mentioned attachments to the report of the commander of the listening troops of 08 April 1941 as well as the following radio situation map (as of 01 April 1941) do not give an overall view of the Red Army units stationed in the border military districts, but document all command bodies and units newly established in the months of January to March 1941. There is an accumulation of rifle corps in the Kiev Special Military District (Document V.63), in Ukraine, as reported by Halder on 06 April 1941. This proves that the latest reconnaissance results were known in the Army High Command. 11 April 1941 Report of Horchtruppen Ost on Red Army Air Forces A comparison of this situation map (Document ¥.67, as of 01 April 1941) with the situation map of the divisions of the Red Army Air Forces of 31 January 1941 (Document IV.69, Annex 16, as of 01 January 1941) shows that these reconnaissance results on the grouping of air forces in the border military districts of the Soviet Union were already available in mid-December 1940 (possibly even earlier). Only the 36th Flying Division (in the inventory 2nd, 43rd, 254th, and 255th Fighter Squadrons) in the Kiev Special Military District and the 50th Flying Division (in the inventory 81st, 228th, 229th, and 231st Long Range Bombing Squadrons) of the North

Caucasian Military District could be newly determined and assigned. A comparison of these air divisions reported in Document V.66 with the Russian documents proves that all divisions were correctly identified and correctly assigned to the Western Military Districts of the Soviet Union.

were assigned. The distribution of the reconnoitered airborne divisions of the frontier military districts is shown in the following table. As can be easily seen, 8 airborne divisions were concentrated in the Kiev Special Military District. Taking into account the recognized 20th, 45th, and 49th mixed aviation divisions of the Odessa and Kharkov Military Districts behind them, the number of immediately forward deployable

aviation divisions (excluding long-range bombing forces) could be quickly increased to 11 divisions. Let us note: a center of gravity in the Kiev Special Military District is becoming clear. Of the eight independent reconnaissance aviation squadrons directly subordinated to the border military districts, 6 squadrons were recognized and 5 of them were correctly assigned. Only the 314th Reconnaissance Squadron did not belong to the Baltic Special Military District but to the Western Special Military District. The 313th Reconnaissance Squadron of the Western Special and the 146th of the Odessa Military District were probably not yet recognized. It was also correctly recognized that the structure of each corps included a reconnaissance air squadron. 20 April 1941 Troop Reconnaissance/Field

Observation From the multitude of available observation reports of tactical importance, only a few excerpts shall be mentioned here as examples. Although the observation results of the units of Army Group B stationed near the border cannot be said to be of operational importance, they nevertheless provided important information for the conduct of the combat operations of the first days in the tactical field. Moreover, the importance for the overall view, which was composed of seemingly insignificant reports to form a mosaic, is underestimated. Significant reports for the evaluators in higher staffs should have been, on the basis of the above-mentioned three reports, the unloading of Cossacks and tanks in the front line, the increasing number of border violations by Red Army aircraft, hurried entrenchment work on the border security installations, significant changes in the behavior of the border patrols and posts, and so on. 12. 30 April 1941 Reports of the Eastern Eavesdropping Forces Also in the above-mentioned period, the Eastern Eavesdropping Forces submitted daily radio situation reports, which reported the massing of the Red Army in the western border military districts. Thus, on April 16, 1941, the following interesting message was submitted: As evidenced by the above attachment to the radio situation report of April 16, 1941, previously reported reconnaissance results could be repeatedly heard and thus confirmed. All airborne divisions were correctly identified with respect to their division number, their affiliation with the Western Special Military District, and their area of deployment. Only the above-mentioned 41st Fliegerdivision (anyway marked with a question mark), a bomber division, was not subordinated to the Western Special Military District but to the Leningrad Military District. On April 17, 1941, the Eastern eavesdropping troops submitted a list of the armies, corps, and divisions of the frontier military districts confirmed by traffic evaluation in the II decade of April 1941, but also those belonging for the last time in the second half of March 1941. A comparison with the Red Army documents accessible today shows: Of the 29 structural elements of the Red Army mentioned in the report, 28 were correctly assigned to the military districts. Only the 56th Rifle Corps, reported as unconfirmed, could not be assigned to the Odessa Military District, since this corps had already been reorganized into the 7th Army of the Leningrad Military District in November 1940. So a very high reconnaissance accuracy by the Horchdienste Ost. Noteworthy is the finding of the 1st Mechanized Corps in the Leningrad Military District. Overall, the beginning of a series of surveys and exercises was noted. According to a message of April 17, 1941, the forthcoming survey of the 90th Rifle Division (Rifle Regiments 19, 173, and 286) was announced. 99 This rifle division of the Leningrad Military District was already in the Baltic Special Military District in a fully replenished condition in the

immediate vicinity of the border. The radio situation report on the air forces of April 18, 1941, should also have given pause for thought. Through numerous traffic evaluations, a large part of earlier reconnaissance results (command posts, stationing areas of armies, corps and divisions of rifle troops, the groupings of the air forces and their assignment to military districts, new radio stations and entire radio networks, etc.), such as the 40th Airborne Division could be confirmed several times and thus classified as correctly identified. New units that appeared regularly were also recognized. Thus, on April 18, 1941 (Document V.72), the 51st Flying Division of the 1st Bombing Flying Corps (Leningrad Military District Airfield Yedrovo) could be reported as a new detection. Also, the finding that this radio network reconnoitered on April 15, 16, and 17, 1941, in the Leningrad Military District had been previously established in the Far East has not gone unnoticed. Although on April 25, 1941, there was a conspicuously low volume of interceptions reported on the Russian western border, probably referring to the last period, there were nevertheless a number of interceptions which should have attracted attention. For example, on 19 April 1941, among other things, the message from a radio station of the 8th Fliegerdivision, "We are moving. "101 Since radio station cancellations were noted several times, this could certainly be understood as an expression of a westward shift of units, detachments, or formations, especially since this could also be confirmed in some cases. On April 25, 1941, the task was set to reinforce border security in the Moldavian District by Red Army units. Since an identical message was intercepted from the White Sea District, it could be concluded that the border troops of the NKVD moved to strengthen border security with the involvement of advanced units of the Red Army. A look at this map confirmed all the reconnaissance results already reported in January 1941 by the Foreign Air Forces East, the Foreign Armies East, and the Commander of the Eavesdropping Forces East, but also brought a whole new set of findings. In the frontier military districts 29 air divisions with 141 air squadrons were found, in the other military districts of the European part of the Soviet Union (Moscow, Orel, Kharkov and Transcaucasian Military Districts) 10 air divisions with 30 squadrons. Thus, a total of 39 air divisions with 171 squadrons in the European part of the Soviet Union. Since 136 air squadrons were reported by the Foreign Air Forces East 1t. their report of 01 February 1941 (Document IV.83-85, Table IV.1 32.), the slow but systematic advance of air forces to airfields in the frontier military districts is now apparent with 141 air squadrons reconnoitered. If one compares the total of 141 air squadrons identified in the border military districts by the Foreign Air Forces East with the 165 air squadrons 104 planned for the offensive into Germany in the operational plan of 15 May 1941 and the 166 air squadrons 105 planned in Watutin's force calculation of 13 June 1941, it becomes clear that the size of the threat potential created by the Red Army air forces was almost completely cleared up. However, the 1t. of Watutin's information that 85 air squadrons were planned in the southwestern direction had not yet been established, although as of 01 January 1941 the Hearing Forces East had already reported 37 air squadrons (Table IV.132) in the Kiev Special Military District, but the Foreign Air Forces East had reported only 30. Obviously, the air squadrons were to be moved forward only later, possibly after completion of their airfields or with the aim of secrecy. However, let us also consider that the aviation forces, due to their excellent maneuvering capabilities, allowed a concentration of the aviation squadrons also of the Western Special and Odessa Military Districts in the interest of the Red Army's Southwest Front (then about more than 80 squadrons). With regard to the number of reconnoitered air division, the reports of Fremden Luftwaffen Ost and Horchtruppen Ost are identical, so they are not to be doubted. 23 April 1941 Continuation of Aerial Reconnaissance As the following document proves, there could be no question of long-term and continuous aerial reconnaissance of the border regions of the Soviet Union. 28 April 1941 Situation Report No. 3 of the Foreign Armies East On 28 April 1941, an extraordinarily informative situation report was submitted by the Foreign Armies East. Summary of Situation Report No. 3 of April 28, 1941 An analysis of this

situation report and its comparison with actual developments in the Red Army buildup (based on Russian documents) brings the following conclusions and confirms the aggravation of a growing threatening situation in the East. 1. clarification of the substantial increase of the total strength of the Red Army by 31 units. Whereas for months a total strength of the Red Army of 200, last reported on 28 January 1941 (as of 15 January 1941) 200.5 calculation divisions (Document IV.101), has always been reported, it has now been possible to establish a total strength of the Red Army of 231.5 calculation divisions 108. Most importantly, the rifle divisions, whose numbers had previously been permanently established at 150 divisions during the winter of 1940/1941, had increased by 25 to 175 reconnoitered rifle divisions (Document V.77, Appendix 1.). Although the situation report contained a number of items of information concerning the armored corps,

even this report could not establish definitive clarity about the organization and strength of the Red Army's armored forces, mechanized corps, armored divisions, and brigades. The number of Red Army cavalry divisions has always been overstated at 33.5 divisions, previously 32 divisions, and in reality amounted to only 13 divisions in June 1941. The cavalry divisions were steadily reduced and transformed into armored or motorized rifle divisions in enforcement

of Mobilization Plan 41 of February 12, 1941, and as part of the modernization of the Red Army. 2. the finding of a progressive massing of the Red Army in the western military districts of the Soviet Union. Assuming that, according to Russian documents, about 170 divisions 109 of the Red Army were massed in the western military districts in April 1941, this reconnaissance result of 166 divisions by the Fremden Heere Ost on 28 April 1941 is a very good one. However, the large number of armored divisions in the western military districts, i.e., the real thrust of the Red Army to break through strong defenses and advance deep into the country, was not yet recognized, but only 5 armored divisions, including the 2 armored divisions of the 1st Mechanized Corps in Pskov and the 2 armored divisions of the 3rd Mechanized Corps in the Kovno-Vilna area, as well as individual armored divisions that could be assigned to the 2nd and 4th Mechanized Corps, respectively. A comparison (Table V.78 ) of the number of divisions (261) planned for the western theater of war according to the operational plan of the General Staff of the Red Army of 11 March 1941 to the 1t. number of divisions (166) reconnoitered in Situation Report No. 3 shows a difference of 95 flivicinnpn not reconnoitered This above. a.m. difference of 95 divisions, according to the Russian documents, can be explained by the fact that the large-scale and treacherous deployment from the inner military districts and from the Far East (Cf. the following remarks and Tabelk V.79. .2) did not begin until May 1941. The growing massing of divisions in the western military districts, which was nevertheless elucidated, can be explained by the large number of units newly formed or restructured in enforcement of Mobilmachingsplan 41 of 12 February 1941, which as a rule were formed in the five frontier military districts, i.e., where their deployment was planned. This view is confirmed by the report that " units of unknown strength appeared (are the author), which according to their clothing and equipment can be addressed as new formations.

"(Document V.77). Let us take this as proof that the Wehrmacht had reconnoitered the new formations of Red Army units, even if the enormous scale of the new formations could not be immediately overlooked. According to the reports "further closing to the border", "pushing forces" and others, it could be inferred that the advancement of forces from the front in the direction of the border, thus the deployment was continued. According to Situation Report No. 3, the increasing concentration of Red Army troops in the southwest direction (Kiev Special Military District/Southwest Front) was detected at 58.5 computed divisions, while the 4th Army had reported 43.5 computed divisions on February 28, 1941 (Table TV.1 03). This finding of a substantial increase in the number of units in the southwestern direction (Kiev Special Military District) is confirmed by the following statement of the situation report, "News of a withdrawal of forces from the Finnish Front and their transport to the area around

Kiev," and likewise the withdrawal of units from the Caucasus Front and their transfer "via Kiev to the west," and should have alerted every operational evaluator in the Army High Command to the direction of the main thrust of the Red Army's planned offensive. 4 In Femost, Situation Report No. 3 of the Foreign Armies East reported 38 divisions of the Red Army and thus an approximately constant strength of troops in the Far East (25 rifle and 8 cavalry divisions and 5 armored divisions/tank or mot. mech. brigades? It was probably not possible to determine more precisely) were reported. In fact, 30 rifle, 4 armored, and 4 cavalry divisions as well as 10 mot. mech. brigades, 3 rifle and 3 airborne brigades, a total of 46 computational divisions (Table IV29) were stationed in the Far East (Transbaikalian Military District and Far Eastern Front) Obviously, the magnitude of the redeployments to western Russia via the Siberian Military District planned as a result of the preliminary orders of 26 April 1941 to the units in the Far East had not yet become known and probably could not yet have been. A comparison of the Red Army formations planned in the west according to the operational plan of 11 March 1941 (261 divisions, Table V.78.) with the small number of formations planned for use against Japan (39 calculation divisions) proves the enormous aggressive potential of the Red Army planned in the West. 5. Reconnaissance of the continuation of the Red Army's covered partial mobilization to circumvent the triggering of a general and open mobilization □ As reported above, reconnaissance had established that early call-ups of conscripts of the fall 1941 cohort were already taking place now (i.e., March/April 1941) under the strictest secrecy. Thus, "(a) ... the cohorts coming up for conscription in the fall of 1941 norm: ... already be drafted by special orders. Already on May 20, 1939, the People's Commissar for Defense of the USSR had issued de Directive on Covered Mobilization No. 2/1/50698 according to variants A and B for secret replenishment on the wartime roster. This instrument was used to mobilize without having to proclaim the general and open mobilization that betrayed the intention Those to be called up received personnel posting orders. 114 O The massive redeployments, restructurings, and retoolings envisaged in Mobilization Plan 41 of the Red Army General Staff of 12 February required specialists in large numbers. The phrase "Z'J partial call-ups of specialists and additions.... predominantly western districts and large cities. ... proves not only this fact, but also that, as can be inferred from Russian documents available today, these new deployments and retoolings took place in the Western military districts, i.e., where their Deployment was planned. Therefore Kinzel could also report: "... no conspicuous transport movements on the main routes to the west and southwest. "O Immediately with the occupation of the countries of the Baltic and Bessarabia, the war commissariats for the registration of the population fit for military service were formed and their conscription started. Situation Report No. 3 stated: "c) In the newly acquired territories in 1939/4C, registration of conscripts by muster, unconfirmed reports of partial enlistments..." Thus, the Wehrmacht had cleared up this fact as well In addition, the experienced general staff officers of the Wehrmacht probably still remember how the tsarist army succeeded in 1914 in pre-empting the German army through covered "mobilization" carried out during a period of preparation for war. 110 Taking into account these experiences and the reconnaissance data reported in Situation Report No. 3, which, when carefully analyzed, revealed the entire dangerous system of mobilization of the Red Army aimed at strategic surprise, the conclusion could only be: The Soviet Union is already in the period of preparation for war, even though Kinzel stated, "An overall mobilization is not discernible." So far correctly recognized, because the general and open mobilization was triggered only on 23 June 1941. Thus, it is also proved that the triggering of the general and open mobilization was not the beginning of the mobilization measures of the Red Army, but only their transfer to the open stage. 6 Despite the excellent reconnaissance results presented in Situation Report No. 3, a certain naivety on Kinzel's part can be inferred from the following remarks in the Situation Report. Since the established historiography is delighted to use some of his statements for its argumentation, some of them are commented here:

According to the Russian documents, these above-mentioned reconnaissance details correspond approximately completely with the actual course of the Red Army's march and its offensive preparations and confirm that the High Command of the Wehrmacht received accurate, if not all-encompassing, information about the Red Army's march at the end of April 1941. However, Kinzel's assessment of the reconnaissance results sometimes appears dubious.

29 April 1941 Report of the Commander of the Fog Troops

The regular reports of the Commander of the Fog Troops to the Commander in Chief of the Army appear to be extremely significant, especially since, as confirmed by other sources, the Red Army attached great importance to the conduct of the gas war. Reconnaissance results in this regard forced the Wehrmacht to pay greater attention to protecting troops from the use of chemical weapons. Thus, on 05 April 1941, Buhle reported to Halder: "1st development program of fog troops." 116 Fog exercises were held on 07 and 08 April 1941, and Colonel Ochsner reported on them to Halder on 28 April 1941

"Report on fog exercise on 7 and 8 Apr. Discussion of progress in equipment and training of troops. Russian use of gas and countermeasures."

117 The single-mindedness with which the Red Army was preparing for the use of chemical warfare agents, including by the air forces, was also confirmed by the Horch troops East in the situation report of 28 April 1941. The Horch troops had intercepted information from the People's Commissar for the Chemical Industry of the Soviet Union about the delivery of warfare agents from Factory 97 in Usolje (80 km NW Irkutsk) to various air squadrons (e.g., 3750 kg to a 4th Air Squadron).

118 The following reconnaissance information from the commander of the Nebeltruppen dated April 29, 1941, also provides evidence of the Red Army's preparation for gas warfare. As noted in the following excerpt from the commander of the Fog Troops' 29 April 1941 report, the Red Army's chemical troops were very well structured. His statement that each rifle corps had independent chemical battalions in its structure can be confirmed

from present knowledge of Russian documents. Of interest in the Army High Command should have been the report on the conversion of chemical battalions to their use in attack.

The Determination of a High Threat Situation in Scandinavia

In view of the enormously worsening situation vis-à-vis Finland and Norway in recent months (Molotov's demand of November 12/13, 1940, Mannerheim's report, events in Svolvaer/Norway, reports from Finnish reconnaissance and Foreign Armies East), the movements of Red Army units in the Arkhangelsk and Leningrad Military Districts were naturally the subject of military reconnaissance by the Wehrmacht. A statement of value only on thorough examination was reported by the commander of the listening troops East on 08 April 1941 with the status 01 April 1941 (Document V.82). Document V.82 120 While Archangelsk was correctly reported as the location of the military district, only radio stations of the 4 armies mentioned here were reconnoitered, for these armies were no longer located in the north (9th Army: disbanded after the Winter War, re-established June 1941 in the Odessa Military District; 13th Army: disbanded after the Winter War, re-established June 1941 in the Odessa Military District; 13. Army: disbanded after the Winter War, re-established in May 1941 in the Western Special Military District; 15th Army: leadership changed after the Winter War to leadership of the Arkhangelsk Military District, re-established in the Far East). Whether the whereabouts of radio stations of the 9th, 13th, and 15th Armies were intended to feign the presence of strong Red Army forces in the Arkhangelsk Military District and camouflage the departure of forces to the western frontier could be an albeit probable assumption. Close to the truth were the reports of the Foreign Armies East of 15 January and 28 April 1941 (Table V.83), according to which some 19 to 23 divisions were concentrated against Finland. Although the northern flank of the Soviet Union was of extraordinary importance to Stalin in the event of a military confrontation with Germany, the nevertheless noted reduction in the number of divisions established against Finland could not have escaped the attention of the operational evaluators of the Wehrmacht in any case, since at the same time the withdrawal of forces from the Finnish front

(Document V.77, pt. 2.) d.) to the area around Kiev could be reported. So let us consider Stalin's measures in the northern area and against Finland: according to his instructions, in the course of the talks in November 1940 Molotov had vigorously demanded Hitler's consent to a second war against Finland, the so-called Continuation War, but had not received it. The operational plan for the eventuality of a second war against Finland, dated 18 September 1940, provided for the use of two fronts, the Northern Front and the Northwest Front, in the inventory of 46 rifle and 2 armored divisions (Table V.84) and 78 air squadrons (totaling 785 tanks and 3,800 aircraft), against Finland's approximately 14 to 17 divisions and 2 air squadrons. The North Sea Fleet, in the inventory 10 destroyers and 40 submarines, was given the task in the operational plan, among other things, "...to support the 14th Army in the capture of the port of Petsamo" and "...to conduct cruiser operations with submarines against naval installations of the western part of Norway and in the Kattegat;"<sup>18</sup> The Finnish peninsula of Hanko was occupied by 25,000 to 30,000 soldiers, and the fighter squadron 13 transferred about 50 aircraft to the peninsula. The fortification of the fishing peninsula created the possibility of dominating the harbor of Petsamo. A comparison (Table V.84) of the division numbers planned in successive operational plans from 11 March 1941 in the northern area against Finland confirms the increasing degree of danger to Finland. Despite these increasing numbers since 11 March 1941 (from 16 to 22 divisions), comparison with the force estimate planned for the continuation war against Finland (48 divisions) shows that the center of gravity of the planned war was now no longer in the northern area. The reasons can be seen in Stalin's instructions of October 5, 1940, to concentrate all available forces of the Red Army on the main direction southwest, thus "... to immediately initiate measures for the pioneer extension of the fortifications of the northern and northwestern borders, in order to further free up forces for the reinforcement of the main grouping in the southwest direction by these created secure fortifications Of course, the operational plans of the General Staff of the Red Army were not known to the Wehrmacht leadership. However, let us note that as of April 1, 1941. the Eastern listening troops had not detected any more troops but only radio stations in the Arkhangelsk Military District, and also the order of magnitude of the number of detected divisions of the Red Army in the northern area reported by the Eastern Foreign Armies was very close to reality. From today's point of view and after knowledge of the Russian documents it seems easy to recognize in these reconnaissance results indications of the shift of the main direction according to the above mentioned Stalin's instructions. However, it can be assumed that this was also understood in the High Command of the Wehrmacht. The instruction of the OKW to the Wehrmacht commander Norway on the conduct of the war in Scandinavia of 07 April 1941 (document V.86) took into account the long suspected and, in the case of the execution of Barbarossa, with certainty to be expected, the joining of the USSR with England. Thus, securing the entire Norwegian area was ordered as the most important task. As evidenced by the following entry in the War Diary of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht dated 23 April 1941, 8 divisions, 1 Panzer Division, and the SS-Kampfgruppe Nord were now planned for Army High Command Norway. Only the 169th Division was additionally provided, while additional forces were not considered possible. 124 The stationing of the main forces of Army High Command Norway in southern and central Norway (Oslo, Drontheim) can only be interpreted with a great deal of imagination as a deployment for an attack on the Soviet Union, if only because of the lack of deployment possibilities to Finland at this time. The stationing of the 2nd and 3rd Mountain Divisions in the Narvik area can be adequately explained by the events at Svolvaer and the necessity of securing the ore transports, especially since, as mentioned above, the grouping in Norway was to be reinforced only by the 169th Division. It can also be inferred from the ordered deployment locations that there was no early stationing of German troops in Finland. Because of the poor readability of the above digital, here is a repetition. Quote V.88 "The German Wehrmacht's campaign against Soviet Russia has been forced upon it by the Russian buildup.

Finland, which had to constantly expect a new Soviet Russian invasion, joins the German campaign of its own free will. Germany does not expect the Swedish Wehrmacht to provide any arms assistance outside Swedish territory, with the proviso that a Swedish request for participation with individual Swedish detachments in the "crusade against Bolshevism" can be granted. On the other hand, the German leadership expects that Sweden, already in the interest of Finland, will do everything possible to cooperate in the elimination of the danger threatening the Nordic area from the Bolshevik Wehrmacht by means of the measures listed below. <sup>127</sup> This information to Sweden can be interpreted as confirmation that the Wehrmacht was aware of this permanent threat situation by the Soviet Union against Finland. Let us note: The requirement of 950 railroad cars was reported, i.e., the transit of one division through Sweden. This small amount of forces planned for the northern flank, even taking into account the Finnish divisions, could probably not follow any successful operational objective, especially since the Army High Command Norway in the instruction of 07 April 1941 (document V.86) was "... reliable securing of the entire Norwegian area not only against hand-to-hand attacks, but also against serious landing attempts by the British, ...p was set as the main defensive task. Thus, only the "...occupation and securing of the Petsamo area... "for the preservation of the nickel mines, which are important for German armament, was set as an offensive task with partial forces of the 2nd Mountain Division, while all other tasks (further actions within the framework of the enterprise "Renntier" as well as "Silberfuchs" were to be decided on depending on the situation. X7 Qfl A comparison of the 8 divisions of the Army High Command Norway stationed in Norway in January 1941 (Doc.

V.90) with the units planned for deployment to Finland in the case of Barbarossa reveals that only one infantry division (the 169th) was to be supplied, to be made available by the Army High Command for deployment to the north as of 01 May 1941 (Document V.86). All this sounds more like a stopgap measure on the northern flank than part of a racial ideological war of extermination and to gain lebensraum. Events in the Balkans On 06 April 1941, the Balkan campaign of the Wehrmacht (2nd and 12th Armies and Panzer Group 1) against Yugoslavia and Greece began. The Reich Press Chief Dr. Dietrich gave the following information to the press on the same morning as the day's slogan: Document V.91 "The German sword judgment on the Serbian betrayal of Europe, which beute started tomorrow and. the strike of the German weapons against the British bastions in the Balkans are for the German press the signal for a new extreme commitment to the people and the Führer." <sup>129</sup> And the High Command of the Wehrmacht announced as late as 06 April

1941: Quote V.92 "In view of the advance of British landing forces from the Greek area to Northeti and the known union with the mobilized Yugoslav Wehrmacht, units of the German Army have started early this morning to counterattack. The Greek and Serbian borders were crossed at several points. <sup>130</sup> Still on April 06, 1941, a Soviet-Yugoslav treaty of friendship was concluded in Moscow, which was quickly backdated by one day to April 05. The assessment of this timing alone makes clear the magnitude of the danger of a confrontation with the Soviet Union with the beginning of the Balkan campaign, which would naturally have led immediately to a joining forces with England. Yugoslavia surrendered on April 17, 1941, and Greece in the period April 21-27. The last of the 55,000 soldiers of the British Expeditionary Corps that landed in Greece left Greece. As the excerpt from document V.93 mentioned below proves, due to the Balkan campaign the deployment of the 11th Army on the southern flank of the Soviet Union began after a refreshment with 7 divisions with an arrival in the area south of Bessarabia between May 16 and mid-June 1941. The basic instructions for a detailed planning of the actions of the Wehrmacht on the flanks to be carried out in connection with Barbarossa were issued in the month of April 1941. About 3 weeks were calculated for the return march of the formations, their refreshment, and the approach to the concentration areas of the 11th Army for Barbarossa, so that, according to the above extract, an arrival on the southern flank was not considered

possible until between 16 May and mid-June 1941. The Black Sea was the operational zone of the Black Sea Fleet of the Soviet Union, which in view of its strength (according to tonnage with multiple superiority over the other riparian states) and according to its operational possibilities could exercise naval supremacy in the Black Sea, threaten the coasts of Romania, dominate the Danube delta or block or even break through the Black Sea exit. As the following lecture note (Document V.94) of April 28, 1940 proves, the Wehrmacht had also recognized the importance of the Black Sea, the Black Sea Fleet, and the straits for the anticipated Soviet Union's alliance with England. Summary of the reconnaissance results in Scandinavia and the Balkans 1. The results of the reconnaissance of the developments in Scandinavia and the Balkans An assessment of the present reconnaissance results of the Wehrmacht can only be made in consideration of the Allied objective, known to the political and military leadership of the German Reich, of encircling Germany, of building up a northern front and a southern front including also hitherto neutral countries, and of winning the Soviet Union for entry into the war against Germany. Nor should the demands made by Molotov on November 12-13, 1940, concerning Finland and the Balkans be overlooked. Taking into account these political aspects, the systematic development of which has been sufficiently documented in the preceding chapters II to V, the reconnaissance results reported by German reconnaissance in the last months, including April 1941, must have been downright alarming. Although there is no evidence that the operational plan of 18 September 1940 was known to the Wehrmacht, the military occupation of the Finnish peninsula of Hanko with considerable Red Army forces and the arming of the fishing peninsula from which the port of Petsamo could be threatened did not remain hidden from it. O The attempt to deceive about the still presence of four armies err. Archankelsk area (document V.82), although only the 14th Army was still deployed in this area, was detected. O The reduction in the number of divisions to Finland (Table V.83) an:, their transfer to the area around Kiev (Document V.77) was cleared up, although according to Watutin's information of June 13, 1941, it was planned to further strengthen the Finnish Froi.. (Table V.84). It must be assumed that the Russian leadership regarded the Finnish Front as a secondary front and that the planned reinforcements had to be supplied from the rear first. In fact, the Russo-Finnish war did not begin until June 25, 1941. 2 The enlightened developments in the Balkans, known to the political and military leadership of the German Reich, were no different. Already the conclusion of a Russian-Yugoslavian non-aggression pact on April 5, 1941 with a Yugoslavian absolutely anti-German government was a reason for Hitler to distrust Stahr more and more. There were also close relations between Yugoslavia, England and France. As early as the end of 1939, reconnaissance informed Hitler about Greek-French general staff meetings. Greece had received a British guarantee. The granting of British bases in Greece increased the German leadership's concern about the possible development of another front and, as a result, the fragmentation of German forces. Of interest is Goering's testimony before the military tribunal at Nuremberg. Quote V.95 "The Simowitsch enterprise was even the very last and decisive reason to dispel di; still existing here and there of all the Führer's 'tetzten misgivings about Russia's attitude and to induce him now to play the prevenir in the direction under all circumstances. Before this Yugoslav Simovich enterprise, although preparations had been made, the last doubts about the necessity of launching an attack against the Soviet Union might still have been deferred. These clear connections between Belgrade and Moscow, however, took away the very last doubts from the Führer. " 133 Quote IV.96 "The new Yugoslav government was without any doubt clearly already in the closest connection with our opponents, which we had at that time, namely England and already in the combination of the coming opponent Russia. " Jodi's statement: Quote IV.97 "This coup of politicizing officers against a legal government, immediately after Yugoslavia had joined the Three-Power Pact, was bound to have an anti-German attitude. Now we were on the verge of a campaign against Greece, against all of Greece, because English divisions had landed there in the

meantime, and this campaign could only be waged with a secure and neutral Yugoslavia behind us. "135 In summary, it can be stated that the political and military developments in the Scandinavian area and in the Balkans were also fully known through the exchange of information with the Finnish but also the Romanian reconnaissance and, in particular, the danger of an Allied alliance with the Soviet Union became clearer. Last Decade April 1941 Further Information on Escalating Developments in the East and the Actions of the Wehrmacht On April 26, 1941, Kinzel reported quasi in advance (Situation Report No. 3 was issued on April 29) the last reconnaissance results, which Halder recorded in the war diary as follows: Quote V.98 "Kinzel: Russia: overall situation unchanged since 1.4. Since that time increase in the west [of Russia] by 10 divisions. Enlarged peacetime army (about 170 div.) can be regarded as at war strength. Whether supply units have been established must be doubted. Trains (e.g., 250 trains to Vilnius area) are constantly rolling for material replenishment, apparently for replenishment to war strength, since numerous divisions have not yet been full, especially of artillery. Krebs reports that there are still numerous divisions which have large material gaps. Personnel-wise, there are complaints about a lack of leaders. Regiments are led by young majors, divisions by colonels. Densification in the west through the influx of new divisions (10) is having an effect primarily around Bialystok and Lviv. Behind the front, which has been opened up closely to the west, are 4 armored groups of varying strength: Bessarabia, near and west of Shitomir, Vilna, Pskov." 133 The Balkan campaign against Greece and Yugoslavia forced a change in deployment plans for Barbarossa. On April 30, 1941, Halder, in his Führer lecture to Hitler, proposed the following further order of march, which Hitler approved: Quote V.99 "1. Timing Barbarossa: 3rd Squadron Peace Schedule 8.4.-20.5. 17 Div, Army troops from home and west 4a Squadron maximum timetable 23.5-2.6. 9 Div. and Army troops from west 4b Squadron maximum timetable 3.6.-23.6. 12 Pz.D. and 12 mot. Div. from Reich, West, and Southeast Acceleration not possible for transportation reasons and because of need for refreshment. Not to be brought up in time: 2 Pz.Div. (2nd u. 5th), 1 mot. Div. (60th)." 137 Here, too, this apprehension based on the reconnoitered enemy situation is again discernible in Halder's clear indication that an acceleration of the deployment, even if necessary, "...for transportation reasons.... and because of the necessity of refreshment "is not possible. Keitel had already pointed out this danger, which was becoming clearer every day, that the Red Army's attack could precede his own strike, on 03 April 1941 (Document V.52) and had stipulated "that the defensive preparations already made against Russian preventive measures from the air or on the ground must be strengthened in accordance with the tension which is likely to increase. " 30 April 1941 Submission of Further Detailed Information on the Development of Red Army Rifle and Cavalry Divisions This document from Fremden Heere Ost (submitted 30 April 1941) proves that detailed reconnaissance information, in some cases extending down to the troop level, was already available as of 15 April 1941 on the enormous number of 192 rifle, 36 cavalry(included in Appendix 2), and 4 armored divisions (232 divisions) in the total Red Army inventory. The figure of 192 rifle divisions as of 30 April 1940 could be said to be quite correctly recognized, since units and formations were given consecutive numbers and Watutin reported 198 rifle divisions in the Red Army's inventory on 13 June 1941. The number of existing tanks(1st, 3rd, 5th, and 6th Armored Divisions) and motorized rifle divisions was again understated and that of cavalry divisions still in the inventory overstated. Summary April 1941 1. The Growth of Reconnaissance Information on the Enemy Side The documents presented in the month of April 1941 by the reconnaissance organs of the Wehrmacht irrefutably prove the magnitude of the growing danger in the east of an imminent offensive by the Red Army. Kinzel's situation report No. 3 of April 28, 1941 (document V.77) proved the growth of the total strength of the Red Army from 200.5 to 231.5 calculation divisions and the number of rifle divisions from 150 to 175, according to the detailed report of April 30, 1941 even to 192 rifle divisions

(documents V. 100,10: which were reconnoitered with their number and partly also with their structure. Auer, if the reconnaissance organs of the Wehrmacht were probably not aware of the mobilization plan of the Red Army of February 12, 1941, nevertheless this noted enormous growth in a very short time proves that the Soviet Union had entered the immediate war preparation period. Incalculable evidence of newly emerged formations with new equipment is contained in the documents. In the frontier military districts, a steadily increasing massing of Russian divisions was noted by closing in toward the frontier and an increasing concentration of troops in the directions toward the frontal salients of Bialystok and Lviv. The growth in the number of divisions and the beginning of concentration in the southwestern direction (Kiev Special Military District) from 39.5 to 58.5 computational divisions (Document V.77) and air forces to 8 aviation divisions (Documents V.60-65 and Document V. 74, Table V.75.) allowed conclusions to be drawn about the Red Army's operational plans. Thus, the withdrawal of forces from the Finland and Caucasus fronts and their appearance in the area around Kiev was noted (Document V.77). Also newly established was the 6th Mechanized Corps in the Bialystok area (Document V.77), here referred to as the VI Panzer Corps. By analyzing the available reports of the Hearing Forces East and the Foreign Air Forces East, it was possible to uncover a condensation of the grouping of the air forces of the Red Army in April 1941. The offensive layout of the Red Army air force grouping (Document V.74) in the border military districts in the immediate vicinity of the border had become unmistakable. Also, the number of air squadrons in the border military districts increased from 136 on 01 February (Document IV.83) to 141 divisions reported on 13 April 1941 (Document V.74). Alarming were the constantly more detailed and insistent warnings of the commander of the fog troops about the preparation of a gas war and the implementation of appropriate training in formations and units of the Red Army and the information about the planned use of gas in the attack, for example, on 29 April 1941 (Document V.81), which forced the Wehrmacht to take vigorous countermeasures, as well as the report of the commander of the listening troops on 28 April 1941 about the supply of poison gas to the troops. A great deal of other information, such as the unloading of Cossacks and tanks (Document V.70), the detection of mobile units near the border (Document V.77), early call-ups of reservists by special orders (Document V.77 ), the withdrawal of Russian embassy families from Berlin, numerous border violations by Russian aircraft (Documents V.77, 70), extensive transport movements (250 transport trains) of guns, tanks, trucks and ammunition in the west and southwest directions (Document V.77), etc., all highlighted the worsening situation in the east. The rigorous course of the Red Army towards its modernization, such as the systematic reduction of cavalry divisions (on April 30, 1941, Kinzel still reported 36 cavalry divisions (Document V.101) by restructuring them into motorized rifle or armored divisions necessary for the planned offensive actions, the establishment of the high number of mechanized corps has not been clearly recognized so far. However, the considerable number of 40 mot.mech. brigades (citation V.54) has been uncovered. Also unrecognized so far was the introduction of modern weapon systems, such as the T-34 and KW tanks, although Hitler raised serious concerns about Russian "giant tanks" (citation V.49) as early as 30 April 1941. 2 The Actions of the Wehrmacht in the Face of an Increasing Dangerous Situation A multitude of reports and information received in April 1941 about the increasingly threatening march of the Red Army was not to cause any reassurance in the German political and military leadership about the danger from the East and to ring all alarm bells. It was not so much the individual reports as the sum of all information that led like mosaic stones through the evaluators to the findings of an increasing danger. As Halder proves on 04 April 1941 with his note in the war diary (citation V.54), the most essential moments of danger in the East, especially the numbers of the marching up formations and the concentration of the air forces of the Red Army in the Army High Command were known. Even the possibility of an advance strike by the Red Army (citations V.54,55) was not ruled out, although Halder

thought it unlikely. Despite the realization that the grouping of the Red Army made possible a rapid transition to attack (Quote V.56), and also in view of the commitment of considerable parts of the Wehrmacht in the Balkans, in Africa, in Norway, and on the Atlantic coast, which would by no means have been available for defensive measures on short notice, Hitler, with his remark "4th Russia: no concern," which Halder recorded on 10 April 1941, nevertheless seemed to take a wait-and-see view of this dangerous situation. Even the consideration of introducing the maximum performance timetable earlier in order to strengthen the defensive forces in the east was again discarded (citation V.56).

However, all measures aimed at perfecting the plans for Barbarossa were vigorously pursued, in particular the new timetable, more precise specifications for the rapid repatriation of the Wehrmacht units deployed in the Balkans or for the equalization of the divisions remaining there, the elaboration of instructions for the actions planned for Barbarossa in Scandinavia and the Balkans, and so on. V.4 May 1941 The latest reconnaissance results as confirmation of the Red Army's offensive intention; the decision for prevention by the Wehrmacht; the now vigorous preparations of the Wehrmacht May 1941 The continuation of the Red Army's deployment and concentration in the western border military districts<sup>139</sup> 1. The enormous structural enlargement of the Red Army on the basis of the mobilization plan MP 41 of 12. February 1941<sup>140</sup> within the framework of the Soviet Union's immediate war preparation period, in particular the increase in the number of divisions to 303, including 21 mechanized corps (in the inventory 42 armored and 21 motorized rifle divisions), as well as the formation of other new formations in accordance with the decision of 23 April 1941 (5 airborne corps and 10 antitank artillery brigades) continued.<sup>141</sup> 2. The Red Army buildup continued with the covered advance of the II Strategic Squadron westward from the inner military districts. By directives dated May 13, 1941, the General Staff initiated the deployment of armies and corps (the 19th Army of the North Caucasus Military District, the 21st Army of the Volga Military District, and the 22nd Army of the Ural Military District, as well as other corps).<sup>142</sup> In the period from May 11-13, 1941, the closing up of units of the 1st Operational Squadron of the Frontier Military Districts took place

closer to the border. In order to ensure troop command, the early transfer of military school course students to the troops was ordered on 14 May 1941. 3. brisk inspection activity of the newly formed formations and units and of intensive exercises to establish their cohesiveness and combat capability, as well as constant war games and command staff exercises of all levels of command to implement the operational plan of 11 March 1941 and to familiarize them with the planned theater of war were carried out. Two features will be considered in more detail in the following: 1. Bringing about the decision to go on the offensive and to force the deployment After receiving Hitler's notification of the withdrawal of his troops and the imminent landing in England (Hitler's letter of May 14, 1941), Stalin pursued the goal of taking advantage of the looming landing of the Wehrmacht in the British Isles and thus the further fragmentation of the Wehrmacht, especially under the impression of the above-mentioned letter. aforementioned letter from Hitler as well as some contradictory reports from the Chief of Administration Reconnaissance of the General Staff, Golikov, to order the immediate preparation of the offensive to Germany. was to take advantage of "... the emerging favorable international situation" for his attack to Germany. Thus, among other things: - the immediate preparation of a more precise operational plan, dated 15 May 1941 (at the earliest), which was to accelerate the Red Army's advance and specified that troops be made partially mobile under cover on the pretext of training exercises, that troops be concentrated closer to the frontier, that preparations be made for the forward deployment of reserve fronts, that air forces be concentrated forward under cover, and that rear services and hospital bases be deployed under the pretext of training exercises. 143 - the hasty implementation of a top-secret operational-strategic war game of the Kiev Special and parts of the Western Special Military District on

May 20-24, 1941 (documents V.102-104), in which elements of the operational plan of October 15, 1941, were reviewed; - the beginning of exceptionally intensive consultative activity by Stalin with the senior military officers on May 19-23, and an extraordinary and top-secret consultation with the commanders-in-chief and members of the war councils of the frontier military districts on May 24, 1941; O by decision of May 20, 1941, the beginning of the conscription of 975. 870 served reservists to the so-called "Great Training Exercises" (the covered partial mobilization) of the Red Army to replenish the personnel of the formations, detachments, and units, especially the rifle divisions, to the approximate wartime structure, insofar as they had not already been drafted;<sup>144</sup> - the instruction to continue the march westward of the wartime strong formations from the Far East temporarily stationed in the Siberian Military District on 25. May 145 as well as the beginning of the establishment of the front command posts on May 27, 1941<sup>146</sup> - the propagandistic conversion to an attack doctrine in accordance with Stalin's speech to the graduates of the military academies on May 05, 1941 in Scherbakov's directive (end of May/beginning of June 1941) on the conversion of agitation and propaganda to the imminent acts of attack<sup>147</sup> and others. 2. on the conduct of a hitherto secret war game From the multitude of war games and command staff exercises of the last months before the beginning of the war, which are available to the author, the operational-strategic war game of the Kiev Special and parts of the Western Special Military District from May 20 to 24, 1941, is of particular interest for our assessment. A section of the original map of this war game is shown in the following document V.102. The correspondence of the planning document of the war game with the operational plan of May 15, 1941, down to the last detail, is convincing. The high number of 8 armies (document V.102) in the Kiev Special Military District proves, the direction of the main efforts of the Red Army was the southwest direction. The exercise situation depicted in the idea of planned actions, to encircle and destroy the grouping of the Wehrmacht in the Lublin area with a concentric strike of the armies of the right wing of the southwest front in cooperation with the left wing of the western front, and to advance with the main forces in the direction of Krakow-Kattowitz, corresponds to the operational plan of May 15, 1941. The 1t. of the depiction of the following exercise documents (documents V.103, 104) concentrated in the immediate vicinity of the border 16 armored divisions (all 16 armored divisions of the Kiev Special Military District<sup>149</sup> planned in the southwestern front (excluding Odessa Military District (4), 16th Army (3), and 19th Army (2)) prove Stalin's offensive intentions. What was practiced was what was planned. I With these findings, the vague hope of the established historiography that Stalin had not agreed to the operational plan of May 15, 1941, should be finally dashed. The opposite is the case. Stalin, in the secret meeting on May 24, 1941, lasting several hours, discussed the results of the war game/practical testing of the operational plan of May 15, 1941, with the chief commanders of the Western frontier military districts/ fronts, their members of the war councils, and the commanders of the air forces of the fronts, in the presence of Timoshenko, Zhukov, Vasilevsky, and Vatutin, as well as other personalities. The further actions of the People's Commissar for Defense and the Chief of the General Staff of the Red Army outlined above prove that Stalin gave his approval to the operational plan of May 15, 1941 (at the earliest), possibly after corrections had been made, Let us see below what signs of this development on the Russian side were detected by German reconnaissance and what measures the Wehrmacht initiated. 01 May 1941 Hitler's Decisions on Further Preparations Barbarossa; the Meeting Note of 01 May 1941 In view of the development of the further advance of the Red Army, which had been elucidated in the month of April, the decision now taken to carry out the attack (Document V. 105) should no longer surprise anyone. The remark "3.) Russian deployment: continued strong troop deployments to the German-Russian border." and statement of the balance of forces depending on the operational directions, among others, under 2.), " Southern section: Russian superiority prove that Hitler and the Führer's headquarters were fully informed about the dangerous

development. The timetable recorded in the transcript of the meeting at Chief L on 30 April 1941, to begin Barbarossa on 22 June 1941, must probably be regarded as Hitler's final decision, taken on the above grounds, as evidenced by the release of the staggered meetings with the "friendly countries ", even if the final decision was to be taken by signal shortly before the attack began. On the other hand, the start of the maximum performance schedule from May 23, 1941, still seemed doubtful, as evidenced by the question mark subsequently entered. The unified line of camouflage of the Barbarossa project ordered by the disinformation plan (Document IV.108) also in the above-mentioned planned talks "Intended German attack in the West, Eastern Front must therefore be covered. " might indeed have been impossible for Stalin to see through due to the centrally conducted and comprehensively coordinated multitude of the most diverse deceptive measures. The following message of the 4th Army to Army Group B of 01 May 1941 (Document V.106) proves how high the danger of a sudden offensive of the Red Army and an occurrence of the defense case ("Achtung Berta") was estimated by the armies already stationed in the East. But it also proves the still existing serious weakness of Army Group B in the east (gaps up to 10 km wide in the defense system), which had been known to Stalin of course, as many spy reports and reconnaissance reports of Golikov prove. Despite Hitler's determination to start Barbarossa on 22 June 1941, serious doubts were mentioned in a meeting of Halder on 03 May 1941 whether the divisions returning from the Balkan War could be made available in time after refreshment. According to his calculations, the SS Division "Adolf Hitler" and the 2nd and 5th Panzer Divisions would not be able to arrive in the east in time or until the last minute.<sup>154</sup> 01 May 1941 Organization of Cooperation on Barbarossa First with Finland In preparation for the Chief of the Wehrmachtfuhrungsstab's meeting with the Finns, the following determinations were made and a detailed meeting note was prepared. The discussions with Finland according to the above program were to be started soon, initiated by the High Command of the Wehrmacht, and then continued by the Wehrmacht units. <sup>157</sup> The phrase truthfully used in the briefing note about the "...Russian attack ab sicht..." (Pt. 1.) and the intention to anticipate Russian plans in this case by a preventive attack (Pt. 2.), as well as the disclosure of the operational objectives (taking away the Baltic and Leningrad, seizing Petsamo, depriving Murmansk) prove that by Hitler and the High Command of the Wehrmacht Finland was considered a safe ally against the Soviet Union. It was Mannerheim who had repeatedly expressed the fear of an attack by the Red Army, as it corresponded to the demands expressed by Molotov in Berlin on November 12/13, 1940, and

Finnish reconnaissance, which had informed Germany of the strength of the Red Army's buildup on the German-Russian border (Cf. III./IV. Chapter.). The extent of the tasks assigned to the Finnish forces, which could hardly be fulfilled (cf. document V.108, pt. 3.) a) to f.), shows the weakness of the Wehrmacht on the northern front and can be interpreted as an indication of an emergency solution made necessary by the expected attack of the Red Army, even if the Finnish Army was to be assigned offensive tasks later on. Hungary was not to be made aware of the Russian threat and German readiness to repel it until late May 1941. <sup>158</sup> 05 May 1941 Enemy Situation Report of Army Group C (North) The Army Groups also assessed the developing enemy situation in the context of their gradually increasing reconnaissance capabilities. Although the attachments mentioned in Document V.109 above are not available, all essential statements made by Army Group North on 05 May 1941 concerning the enemy situation can be judged to have been correctly identified. Some important statements of the document shall be commented: 1. Even if the following formulation "The distribution of forces up to now does not yet permit the conclusion of a special operational intention. " still testifies to a certain uncertainty in the assessment of the Red Army's intentions and to the fear that the Red Army might also attack in the northwest, especially since a larger group of forces was reconnoitered in the Wirballen-Kalwarja area and eastward to Krottingen, the following sentence "Z. At present (boldface by author) it

is to be expected that the Red Army will defend itself in the area west of the Dnieper-Düna line." the correct statement was made, because in the northwest direction the Red Army actually planned to defend itself. This was in line with Stalin's basic decision of 05 October 1940, already mentioned several times, on an asymmetric strategy, which envisaged defending in the north, northwest, and south, concentrating all available forces on the southwest (Kiev Special Military District), and conducting the offensive there.<sup>160</sup> The operational plans of March 11 and May 15 (at the earliest) 1941 prove the implementation of the decision made by Stalin personally. The wording of the text also shows the conviction that it would be possible to anticipate a possible

Russian attack, since it was not yet possible to identify a "special operational intention. It was further stated that it was not impossible that the Russians, in anticipation of a German attack, "... would try to secure the Suwalki summit and the Memel line by seizing the Memel area. " What foresight! In fact, the operational plan of the Red Army General Staff of 18 September 1940 provided, "With the aim of shortening the front of the 11th Army and capturing a more favorable starting position for the attack in the period of concentration of troops in cooperation with the 3rd Army of the Western Front to take possession of the Sejny, Suwalki area and advance to the front line Shitkemen, Filipovo, Rachi."<sup>161</sup> Let us also take this as an indication that the Red Army was planning an offensive, since under the conditions of an ongoing Wehrmacht attack such a task would not have been feasible at all. 3) The exact designation of the defense line Nyemen-Dubysa-Venta and of the positions south of Riga along the Düna River proves that the Wehrmacht was able to reconnoiter the intensive expansion of these positions. A comparison of this information with the information material on the land fortifications of the USSR issued by the Foreign Armies East on 15 March 1941 (Document V. 12) shows agreement. 01 to 10 May 1941 Reports of the Listening Troops East In May 1941, too, the commander of the Listening Troops East made daily situation reports on the listening results achieved. As evidenced by a series of analyzed situation reports for the I decade of May 1941, surprisingly, it was reported relatively often, "Until ... No significant changes bzu new findings. " In fact, in preparation for the celebrations of 01 May (preparation and conduct of the military parade in Moscow), as well as Stalin's speech to graduates of military academies in Moscow on 05 May (presence of commanders in Moscow), a relative calm was noticeable. But the preparation of the parade was also noted by the listening service. Thus, on April 30, 1941, the listening service reported that on April 27 the Moscow control center was detected in traffic with the air force units approaching for the May parade, and a traffic interruption in the radio network of the air forces of the Leningrad Military District in the relevant period from 30 April to 02 May 1941, as well as the beginning of the departure of the air force units from Moscow on 06 May 1941. Nevertheless, some important listening results could not be overlooked in this decade: On 04 May 1941, multiple repeats of pronouncements made it possible to report the deployment of the 1st Mechanized Corps in Pskov (Leningrad Military District) and its structure (1st Armored Division and the 163rd Motorized Rifle Division). Also, on 04 May 1941, through traffic evaluations, 25 air divisions (p. 7 following excerpt) were correctly traced in the grouping of the air forces of the Western Military Districts (of which 21 were in the Western Frontier Military Districts), although the 42nd Airborne Division was not included. Fernbombenfliegerdivision, Standort Borowskoje (TB-3 and DB-3f), could not be assigned to the 3rd Fernbombenfliegerkorps and the 22nd Fliegerdivision, Standort Saporoshe (DB-3 and DB-3f), could not be assigned to the 4th Fernbombenfliegerkorps. As this listing of reconnoitered airborne divisions proves, radio communications are, of course, always very treacherous. This, of course, was also known to the Red Army, so a vigorous struggle was waged to keep the deployment secret. The eavesdropping troops received a number of order calls to enforce stricter radio discipline, e.g., on 06 May 1941, the instruction from the 15th Air Division (Lviv) "To respond is only to the call of the control radio station."<sup>163</sup> Another Mechanized Corps with the camouflage

designation "X. Mechanized Corps" could be assigned to the 5th Army (Kiev Special Military District) on 08 May 1941 while listening in on an exercise. The 3rd Mechanized Corps was recognized on 09 May 1941 and assigned to the 11th Army of the Baltic Special Military District. On May 10, 1941, a number of details were reported on the 1st Long Range Bombing Corps (Leningrad Military District). By decision of the Council of People's Commissar : of 05 November 1940, the establishment of five long-range bombing corps (four of them in the Western Frontier Military Districts, one in the Far East) began with the aim of creating the structural and command conditions for the conduct of independent strategic air operations in the depth of the Western theater of war. After all, the range of the long-range bombers, equipped with DB-3F aircraft, was 3,300 km. The Wehrmacht had thus recognized this dangerous development, even if not everything had been cleared up yet with regard to the structures. 164 Extensive findings of routing and subroutine radio stations, which were detected using coded or camouflage names of the participating units and troop units a. Exercise networks proved the intensive exercise activity of the Red. Army in the border military districts. 165 It could be inferred from various radio messages that the reinforcement of the border guard by forward units of the Red Army had been ordered. 10 May 1941 Determination of the Deployment of Red Army Air Forces by the Foreign Air Forces East As of 10 May 1941, the Foreign Air Forces East reported the progressive deployment of Red Army air forces in the western border military districts, as evidenced by the following document. Thus, according to this document V.l 11, a total of 5,850 aircraft were detected in the European part of the Soviet Union. It is recognizable the high massing of the air forces in the frontier military districts, but especially in the southwest directionum If we assume that, according to the investigations of Russian historians, on June 22, 1941, the Russian air forces had concentrated 8,240 fighter aircraft 167 in the frontier military districts, it becomes clear that the "deployment of the Soviет: Fliegertruppe" as of 10 May 1941 was in full swing but not yet completed The total inventory of fighter aircraft on 01 June 1941 was 18,759 aircraft. 168 11 May 1941 Information on Limited Aerial Reconnaissance As early as 05 May 1941, Halder recorded in the war diary, following a lecture by General von Salmuth, "(a) Alleged lack of aerial reconnaissance in the east." As a result, the following information went to Army Group B: "As this reply of the Army High Command to Army Group B of 11 May 1941 proves, there were indeed a number of problems in the comprehensive aerial reconnaissance of the areas near the Soviet Union's borders. In addition to the necessary meteorological conditions mentioned in the letter, delays had also occurred due to the deployment of Rowehl Reconnaissance Group aircraft in the Balkans. May 11, 1941 Alarming Message from the Horch Troops East On May 11, 1941, the commander of the Horch Troops East reported in his radio situation message 11/5 (document V. 113) a whole number of formations and units newly established in the month of April 1941 (drawn in black), which proved the energetic continuation of the Red Army's advance. Not to be overlooked were these constantly continuing movements

from east to west, combined with the appearance of new radio stations and entire radio networks. Thus, among other things, the approach of the 56th Rifle Division (originally Leningrad Military District) from Lida to Grodno, i.e. in the direction of the frontal balcony of Bialystok (Western Special Military District) and the 75th Rifle Division likewise to the Western Special Military District were noted. As reported by the above-mentioned document V.l 13 of May 11, 1941, the concentration of new Red Army formations in the frontal salient of Lviv was particularly noticeable. The report of repeatedly by traffic evaluations already known command posts and formations of the land forces and the air divisions including the designation of the subordinated air squadrons in accordance with the real situation development took place on 12, 21 and 28 May 1941 in the form of extensive lists. Among other things, the structure of the 1st Fliegerdivision with the 137th, 145th, and 147th Fliegergeschwadern of the Arkhangelsk Military District (11 May 1941) or the 22nd Fliegerdivision with the 8th, 11th, and 21st

Fliegergeschwadern of the 4th Long-Range Bombardment Corps (15 May 1941) was correctly clarified. On May 23, 1941, the 22nd Fliegerdivision could be recognized as the Fernbombenfliegerdivision and its detachment from the Odessa Military District, although the formation of the 4th Fernbombenfliegerkorps was not yet mentioned. Quite a number of units could be confirmed as being in the war division. Continued exercises and inspections of Red Army units and formations were reported. The advancement of parts of the air forces to airfields of the border troops of the NKVD near the border and reports of entrenchment work detected on the German side were also overheard. 12 May 1941 Clarification of the Wehrmacht's deployment On 12 May 1941, the Army High Command issued a clarification of the deployment instructions for Barbarossa that had become necessary as a result of the Balkan campaign. According to the above-mentioned document V. 114, the contents of which should be beyond any doubt, exactly 72 divisions of the Wehrmacht, including only 2 armored divisions (the 1st and 6th), were stationed in East Prussia and the Generalgouvernement on May 12, 1941. The start of Squadron 4a (maximum power schedule) was scheduled for 22 May 1941. As shown in the document, even Squadron 4a, which was to run until 01 June 1941, provided only for the eastward movement of rifle, light, and security divisions, not yet for a deployment of armored divisions. The deployment of the panzer divisions, which would expose the

Wehrmacht's intention to launch a preemptive strike, was not planned until Squadron 4b, beginning 01 June 1941. Also, no bomber forces were yet stationed in the east. The deployment of the 11th Army, whose divisions were returning from the Balkan campaign and required refreshment, to Army Group South took place in the second half of May to I decade of June 1941. 14. May 1941 Hitler's Letter to Stalin In the spring of 1941, when the concentration of large German forces in East Prussia and the Generalgouvernement had not even begun, Stalin addressed a personal letter to Hitler, informing him that it had become known, astonished, and created the impression that Hitler was preparing to fight the Soviet Union. In response, Hitler sent Stalin a detailed letter on May 14, 1941 (quote V.115), also personal, and, as he emphasized in the text, confidential, the existence of which is vehemently denied today by established historiography. An excerpt is quoted here: Quote from v.113 (excerpt) "Dear Mr. Stalin, I am writing you this letter at the moment when I have endgu. come to the conclusion that it is not possible to achieve a secure peace in Europe z: \ win, not for us, not for the coming generations without final Zer Storni: of England and its destruction as a state. ... Among the mass of the German people any war is unpopular, but a war against England especially, since the German people regard England. Brudervolk regarded and a war between us as a tragic event. ... However, d.: insulting replies to my peace proposals and the constant broadening d-. geography of warfare by the English with the undisguised ambition to involve a.. World into this war, convinced me that there was no other way out except the invasion on the (English the author) island with the final destruction of this country. ... That is why my decision to carry out the invasion of the island seized the oppositi and many layers of the German society, including also individual highest representatives of the state and military leadership. ... As an example Hitler cites the flight of his deputy, Hess, to England. These generals, not understanding the whole unreliability of such views when war is forced upon their country, try to do what is pleasing to thwart the piz to invade England. In forming the invasion forces far . eyes of the enemy's air forces, but also in connection with the recent operations in the Balkans, a large number of my troops, about 80 divisions, gathered along the border with the Soviet Union, which may have given rise to the rumors currently circulating about a probable war between us. I assure you with the honor of the head of state, it is not so. From your side, wa I in addition also with understanding einordnen that you could not ignore these rumors completely and also a sufficient number of your troops at the border konzentrz ren. In this way, without our wish, but solely by the force of the developing situation, exceedingly large groupings of troops are facing each other on our borders. In such a situation, I do not entirely exclude

the possibility of the accidental emergence of an armed conflict which, under the conditions of such a concentration of troops, can assume very large proportions and the cause of which can be difficult or simply impossible to determine. It is no less difficult to stop this conflict. I will be extremely frank with you. I fear that some one of my generals will deliberately start such a conflict in order to save England from her fate and to thwart my plans. The speech will go on for a month altogether. Probably June 15-20 I plan to begin the massive transfer of troops from your border to the west. I ask you not to be influenced by any provocations on the part of my generals who have forgotten their duty. And I, it goes without saying, will endeavor to give no cause whatsoever. If it is not possible to prevent a provocation on the part of any of my generals, I ask you to show self-control, do not react and inform me immediately of what has happened through the news channel known to you. ... Furthermore, I hope for our meeting in July. Sincerely, Yours, Adolf Hitler, May 14, 1941." Even though this letter has not been released to this day because it incriminates Stalin, there is conclusive evidence of its existence: 1. At a meeting of von der Schulenburgs (German ambassador in Moscow) with Dekanosow (Soviet ambassador in Berlin) on 09 May 1941, an exchange of letters between Stalin and Hitler was suggested. After Stalin's approval, Molotov issued an instruction on 12 May 1941 concerning this forthcoming exchange of letters with Hitler. 174 2nd Flight of a Special Courier Ju 52 on May 15, 1941. On May 15, 1941, an unscheduled flight of a special courier Ju 52 took place on the route Berlin-Minsk-Smolensk-Moscow and, after landing at the central airport and refueling, returned, unmolested by Soviet air defenses. It is reasonable to assume that this strictly confidential and personal letter of Hitler was delivered to Stalin. The taking place of this flight was confirmed by Evaluation Order No. 0035 of the USSR People's Commissar for Defense, Marshal Timoshenko, dated June 10, 1941. 175 3. Simonov's interview with Zhukov in 1965/1966. Zhukov stated: quote v. 116 (excerpt) "Ah answer Hitler wrote to Stalin a letter, also personally and, as he underlined in the text, confidentially. In this letter he wrote that our information is correct, that in Poland are indeed concentrated large units of troops, but that in the future he can be convinced that this is not against Stalin, but must explain that the concentration of his troops in Poland is not directed against the Soviet Union, that he intends to strictly observe the concluded pact and vouches with the honor of the head of government of the state. But his troops are concentrated in Poland with other goals. The territory of West and Central Germany is exposed to strong English bombardment and is well observed by the English from the air. Therefore, he was forced to move large contingents of the troops to the east to have the opportunity to re-equip and re-form them there in Poland under cover. As I understand, Stalin trusted this letter." 176 Zhukov's reproduction of the contents of Hitler's letter to Stalin was identical in meaning, so that no doubt can arise as to his explanations. Hitler's formulation in his letter, "Expected June 15-20, I plan to begin you massive transfer of troops from your border to the west," was particularly significant to Stalin. He now believed that after the mass of German formations had landed on the island for his planned offensive into Germany he would open another favorable window of opportunity. For, 1t. Zhukov (quoting V.l 16), confided:; Stalin this letter. The Directive for Enemy Deception of 15 February 1941 (Document IV.108) stated: "b) In the 2nd period, the deployment Barbarossa is to be presented as the gK deception in the history of war, which served to distract from the final preparations for the invasion to England. "Although 1t. of the directive was to initiate the 2nd stage of time for disinformation from about mid-April 1941, the High Command of the Wehrmacht: on May 12, 1941, determined to begin this 2nd stage simultaneously with the transition to the maximum performance schedule of the Eastern transports on May 22, 1941. An essential role in the operation to disinform Stalin was played by the above-mentioned letter of Hitler dated May 14, 1941, which was probably to be understood as a prelude to the start of this 2nd stage. The following directive of the High Command of the Wehrmacht of May 25, 1941 (Document V.l 17) on deception of the enemy demanded that "attack

preparations against England be continued with particular emphasis," thus translating the deceptive measures mentioned by Hitler in his letter of May 14, 1941, into practical mock actions by the Wehrmacht. Obviously, this was intended to lend further credibility to Hitler's letter. As the following document V.1 18, transcript of an interrogation in 1979 of one of those involved at the time, proves, this intention of Stalin to take advantage of the landing of the Wehrmacht in England and its involvement in the expected heavy fighting to open the offensive into Germany was known to the leading generals of the Red Army. This Situation Report No. 4 of the Foreign Armies East requires no further explanation, since it aptly describes the seriousness of the threat situation developing in the East. Nevertheless, a more detailed examination leads to the following summary result: 1. The Situation Report provided precise information on the advance or intermediate movement of Red Army units in the respective operational directions, which have already been designated as fronts here. An individual check by the author of the divisions mentioned in the situation report as well as in the appendix revealed the direction west/southwest as the general deployment target. The advance of units of the 1st Operational Squadrons of the I Strategic Squadron stationed in the western border military districts, which took place in the period from May 11 to 13, 1941, in the direction of the western border, was thus correctly identified. 180 How just this real assessment of the situation is distorted by the established historiography is proven by the following justification of the historian Hillgruber for the concentration of troops of the Red Army in the border salients (quote V.120i. which cannot be surpassed in absurdity. Quote V.120 "The conspicuous concentration of strong Soviet forces in the frontier outposts of Bialystok and Lemberg, and (less surprisingly) in the Baltic, is probably explained above all zz/lern by the effort of the Soviet government to keep the population in these newly won areas (in view of the German advance and the . hope of liberation from Soviet rule) and to

deprive them of the possibility of immediately going over to the Germans in the event of war." 181 That the fears of the Russian side mentioned by Hillgruber existed with regard to the reliability of parts of the population cannot be denied. The Soviet side had also recognized this, and German reconnaissance established that evacuations were carried out and that there was also an exchange of Lithuanian officers and the deployment of Russian officers (Document V.126). However, the gigantic deployment of the Red Army in the border military districts, but especially in the border salients, had nothing to do with the reliability of the population living there. A probably somewhat childish view of Hillgruber 2. The beginning of the deployment of the units from the depth of the country, called units from the Leningrad Military District (here called the Finnish Front) or from the North Caucasian Military District (called the Caucasus Front) was, as already mentioned in Situation Report no. 3, correctly elucidated. The detection of new unknown divisions in the western border military districts and their conspicuous concentration in the direction of the Bialystok and Lviv frontal salient could not be interpreted otherwise than as a large-scale deployment of the Red Army. The directives of the General Staff of the Red Army on the strategic westward movement from the inner military districts (deployment 19th, 21st and 22nd Armies, the II Strategic Squadron of the Red Army) were issued on May 13, 1941. 182 3. Despite information from Japanese reconnaissance about the departure of 20-30 transport trains from the Far East to the western border of the Soviet Union, Foreign Armies East drew the conclusion "A withdrawal of significant forces from the Far East and their transfer to Europe has not yet occurred nor is it likely to occur on a larger scale." The strategic redeployment of divisions from Femost (16th Army of the Trans-Baikal Military District and the Femost Front, including the 5th Mechanized Corps and 57th Armored Division with 1443 tanks) ordered by preliminary orders of April 26, 1941, was considered possible only on a limited scale, so the real magnitude of the approaching troops was not yet recognized. Obviously, even the publication of the Japanese newspaper "Domei Zusin" at the end of April/beginning of May was not believed that considerable contingents of the Red

Army were being moved from the Far East to Europe. The fact that the arrival of the forces from Femost was not reported may be explained by the fact that they were temporarily stationed in the Siberian Military District in order not to expose Stalin's offensive intentions by the appearance of the Femost troops in the border military districts. The directive to continue the redeployment of these troops was issued on May 25, 1941, so that the concentration of the 16th Army in the Shepetovka-Berdichev-Proskurov area did not take place until the period from June 15 to about July 10, 1941. Nevertheless, it is astonishing that there was no expectation on the part of Fremden Heere Ost of the arrival of these forces, as evidenced by the formulation quoted above. 183 4. The system of reorganization of units, personnel replenishments, and so-called "large training exercises" (individual call-ups of an estimated 500,000 reservists) was a covered partial mobilization to establish the readiness of the Red Army for war without triggering the general and open mobilization, which could not be camouflaged. This did not take place publicly until 23 June 1941 (the decision to do so was made on 22 June, 0600 hours). 184 Situation Report No. 4 proves this with the formulation "By continuing the individual convocations ... an overall public mobilization can be largely prepared and disguised." that the Wehrmacht leadership was aware of the system of mobilization of the Red Army and thus fully recognized the dangerousness and insidiousness of establishing readiness for war. This goal was also recognized, as evidenced by the phrase "... to bring about a considerable strengthening of the Red Army without letting it appear to the outside world for tampering reasons. "5. the determinations made by Stalin on October 5, 1940 on an asymmetrical strategy (defense in the Baltic Special Military District/Northwest Front and concentration of offensive forces in the Kiev Special Military District/Southwest Front) were correctly reproduced by the Lithuanian officer with regard to the Northwest Front (Annex 1 to Document V. 119.) and, according to his statement, were also practiced by the units (here the 14th Division of the Leningrad Military District). In this respect, no contradiction is discernible with the statement of a saner Russian officer, reported by the Abwehr, that he intended to fight in Lithuania only in a stalling manner. However, the new concentration of strong formations, including a motorized mechanized group and of paratrooper units in the Kiev Special Military District, especially in the frontal salient of Lviv, was also recognized, so that the operational evaluators in the Army High Command were able to draw conclusions about Stalin's above-mentioned asymmetric strategy. However, in view of the enormous increase in the size of the Red Army ordered since 12 February 1941 in accordance with Mobilization Plan 41, the estimate that "new formations of closed formations are not discernible either in Europe or in the Asian part" remains incomprehensible. Somewhat surprising must also be the overall assessment made in spite of the worrying details reported in the situation report, "Intentions to attack are not discernible. ". After all, Kinzel, it seems, avoided signing this situation report. After Colonel Krebs returned from Moscow, where he had General Köstring representative, the latter made an equally extremely questionable report to Halder on 05 May 1941, which Halder recorded in the war diary as follows: QuoteV.121 "Russia will do everything to avoid war. Every concession except territorial demands is to be expected. Russian leadership corps decidedly bad (devastating impression). Difference from 1933 impression is strikingly negative. Russia will need 20 years to regain old heights (impression of Krebs). Material armament: . in progress. New fighter. New long-range bomber. But flying performance and capability low. Long range bombers apparently

assembled near German border. Material transports for position building run to border. From troop assembly: ■■ (on the move) otherwise nothing to be seen. " 15 May 1941 English News in Troops Information In its broadcast of 13 May 1941, the English radio station Daventry came to contradictory assessments in its broadcasts in English and German during an overview of the war situation. While in the German-language part Germany was accused of a total failure in political terms despite the

successful course of the Western Offensive and the battles in Yugoslavia and Greece were defamed as conquests, in an English-language contribution there was high praise for the Wehrmacht with the words "The German army today, as it was in September 1939, is without doubt the largest, most powerful and most completely equipped army in the world." Surprisingly, this broadcaster, who was agitating against Germany, already counted Russia among Hitler's victims, although on 13.5.1941 military action against the Soviet Union could not have been foreseeable at all. Was it an attempt to draw Russia further to the Allied side or was the station already aware of more? At least, however, it was recognized as a task to make a landing of Germany in England impossible. So it was expected. But also astonishing is the announcement of questionable British enemy propaganda theses by the High Command of the Wehrmacht to the troops, even if partly intended only for officers. 20 May 1941 Information of the Air Force Command Staff on the Situation of the Red Army's Land Forces As of 20 May 1941, the Air Force Command Staff gave information re: the massing of the Red Army's land forces in the western military districts of the Soviet Union to the air fleets. As the above-mentioned document V.l23 proves, not every reconnaissance informacc corresponded to the actual rapid development of the situation. In contrast to the accurate: Air Force reports on the huge concentration of airfields of the Red Army air forces in the border military districts (at least to a: depth of about 300 km), their ground organization and the numbers of aircraft stationed there, this information of the Air Force Command Staff on the situation of the Red Army land forces, allegedly as of 20. Ma 1941, on Situation Report No. 3 of the Foreign Armies East of 28 April 1941, was out of date and also adopted some of its misjudgments (Documen V.77 Summary.). In particular, initial indications of the covered deployment of the armies of the II Strategic Squadron (the 19th, 21st, and 22nd Armies and other army corps) of the Red Army ordered on May 13, 1941, as well as the westward deployments of the 16th Army of the Trans-Baikal Military District? and of parts of the Far Eastern Front, which had begun in late April/early May 1941, were not mentioned, although these had been detected by Japanese reconnaissance and made known worldwide by the newspaper "Domei Zusin" and could by no means have escaped German reconnaissance. Also first reports of this development already mentioned in the situation report No. 4 of May 15, 1941 were not included. The author assumes that the Luftwaffe regarded this document as the first general information, since it was initially completely fixed on its first task to be fulfilled, the execution of the 1st air operation to achieve air supremacy, and the support of the Army and the fight against the land forces of the Red Army was regarded as a later subsequent task, for which one

would then receive the latest information. Nevertheless, in mid-May 1941, in the assessment of the situation of the land forces (Document V.123), a figure of 194 computational divisions in the European part of the Soviet Union was determined out of a total Red Army strength of 229.5 computational divisions. The figure of 194 (196) computation divisions in the European part seems realistic, since on 22 June 1941 Russian documents gave a figure of 216.5 divisions, while the total strength of 229.5 divisions was substantially understated, since on 13 June 1941 Watutin had already reported 303 divisions in the total Red Army strength. Major Westerberg (Staff Picture Department of the General of the Air Force) submitted aerial photographs of Rowehl Squadron in the Russian border area on May 22, 1941, which were commented on as follows: "The extensive reinforcement work (especially also armored trenches) along the border stands out clearly. Numerous cable trenches prove the preparation of continuous defensive positions. The pictures confirm our view of the Russians' determination to hold on the border. "188 Also on May 22, 1941, Major Schildknecht (Foreign Armies East) gave a lecture on the organization of the Red Army on the German frontier: quote V.124 "...strongly forward-opened. Abwehrgliederung in three large groups: Baltic: 1 HGr. of 2 armies, behind it a group of operational reserves, I group strategic reserves. Center: 1 HGr., 3 armies, behind it 1 army oper. Res., 1 group strateg.

reserves (?) South: 1 HGr., 3 armies, 1 group oper. reserves. Independent Pruth front: 1 army group.  
"189 As is readily apparent, only the situation of the Red Army's I Strategic Squadron, i.e., the so-called covering armies, whose initial task was actually to provide cover for the deployment of the shock armies, was assessed here. 190 May 27, 1941 Provision by Army High Command 4 of circular images of the area near the border of the Soviet Union These circular images provided by Army High Command 4 were undoubtedly significant for the tactical actions of the attacking troops in the first days, possibly also for the first artillery strikes, etc., since they provided information about military installations (e.g. a rifle and an engineer barracks above), barricades, prominent terrain points (heights above), villages (a view of Olita above), important buildings (a church above) and thus allowed a good orientation on the terrain. May 1941 The Further Ideologization of the Impending War After Hitler's speech to the leading cadres of the Wehrmacht on March 30, 1941, an increasing ideologization of issued directives and orders became visible, which were characterized by the imminent struggle of the two antagonistically opposed world views. A remark in the Rosenberg diary shows that a first discussion with Hitler about the necessity of a war against the Soviet Union took place with Alfred Rosenberg, the ideology commissioner of the Third Reich, only on April 2, 1941. Rosenberg recorded about it, "In order to be able to talk about the Russian question in all tranquility, he invited me to dinner, so that we would have the whole evening for the consideration of a problem which to solve today has entered the field of immediate military policy." 192 It is also evident from Hitler's formulation in his conversation with Rosenberg on 06 May 1941, "I must take responsibility for the move, Stalin is only waiting for America's input....", it can be inferred that not ideological but military-strategic requirements were causal for carrying out a strike against the Red Army in anticipation of this danger. 193 This formulation of Hitler's not only testifies to a marked distrust of Stalin's anticipated actions, but rather expresses his firm conviction of Stalin's antagonism and his willingness to enter the war against Germany alongside Great Britain and the United States. As a result of a conversation with General z.b.V. Müller and the Colonel-Counselor of War on 06 May 1941, Halder recorded in the War Diary: "a) Order to troops in the spirit of the last Führer address to the generals. Troops must help fight through the ideological struggle in the East." 194 and thus proves that some leading cadres of the Wehrmacht certainly recognized the ideological content of the military confrontation in the East that had become necessary. It is beyond the scope of this study to deal with the other documents ("Richtlinien auf Sondergebieten zur Weisung Nr. 21 (Fall Barbarossa)" of 13 May 1941, "Erlass über die Ausübung der Kriegsgerichtsbarkeit im Gebiet Barbarossa" of 13 May 1941, the "Richtlinien für das Verhalten der Truppe in Russland" of 19 May 1941, and the "Richtlinien für die Behandlung politischer Kommissare" of 06 June 1941). The author, himself a retired professional soldier, expressly distances himself from the contents of these so-called "Guidelines on Special Fields" and refers to Warlimont's book. "Im Hauptquartier der deutschen Wehrmacht 1939 bis 1945" (pp. 166–187), who tried rudimentarily to explain this explosive situation and to explain the distance of the Wehrmacht from these directives. Evidence is the order of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army to maintain discipline of May 24, 1941, referred to as the "Disciplinary Decree," which was issued as a certain remedy to the "Commissar Order." 195 Of course, the established historiography used just these "directives in special fields", especially the so-called "Commissar Order" unworthy of a soldier, to defame the character of the Wehrmacht's attack anticipating a Red Army offensive as a "racial-ideological war". It is much less mentioned that this order was not signed at all, that it did not demand an execution report to Hitler or the High Command of the Wehrmacht, and that it was distributed only up to the level of the Army Commanders-in-Chief or the Air Fleet Commanders.

of the air fleet commanders. Nor is it mentioned that a whole series of orders, such as the directives on courts-martial or orders on prisoners of war, including the so-called "Nachtund Nebel-Erlass" ("Night

and Fog Decree"), were drawn up by other departments and submitted to Hitler.<sup>196</sup> But it also seems essential to point out once again that these ideological questions only gained importance after the decision in favor of Barbarossa, which had been reached for other reasons, had long since been made. 31 May 1941 Feindnachrichtenblatt Nr. 4 des Festungsstabes Wagener The following

Feindnachrichtenblatt Nr. 4 des Festungsstabes Wagener represents a spatially limited excerpt from the enlightened overall situation. These enemy messages of the Fortress Staff are quite significant for the assessment of the local development of the opposite enemy side, but in view of the limited area of responsibility of the Fortress Staff they cannot provide an overview of the overall operational situation developing on the Russian side. Nevertheless, they contain a number of pieces of information which, in conjunction with reports from other reconnaissance channels, permit conclusions to be drawn about the anticipated actions of the Red Army. The detailed reconnaissance data, which, as shown in the hand sketch, refer exclusively to parts of the border area of the Baltic and the northern area of the Bialystok frontal salient of the Western Special Military District, represent the tactical situation in the last decade of May 1941 essentially correctly. However, the forces in the Baltic Special Military District were overstated at 32 computational divisions (in real terms, about 23 divisions), while the Western Special Military District was correctly reconnoitered at 43 computational divisions (in real terms, 44). However, the number of recognized armored divisions was insufficient. While in the Baltic Special Military District only 2 of 4 existing or unfolding armored divisions were reconnoitered, in the Western Special Military District the reconnaissance of not a single one of 12 armored divisions of the 6th, 11th, 13th, 14th, 17th, and 20th Mechanized Corps of the military district was successful.<sup>198</sup> At least, however, the structure of a Red Army Mechanized Corps (here labeled III Armored Corps) was elucidated approximately correctly with an inventory in front of two armored divisions (2nd and 5th) and one motorized rifle division (here, however, labeled motorized rifle brigade and with question marks).<sup>199</sup> For several weeks the departure of larger Red Army formations : forest camps near the border had been noted. An attack by the motorized and armored units assembled in the immediate vicinity of the border was considered possible, even though it was not expected at first because of the overall situation.

However, Enemy News Sheet No. 4 contained detailed and highly important information on the location and buildup of defenses in the Ncrd East, which 1t. Document generally came from agent reports. The existing gaps in this information can be explained by the narrow area of responsibility of Fortress Staff Wagener and the limited depth of reconnaissance available to the troops. Summary May 1941 1. Increasing Reconnaissance Results on the Development of the Threat Situation in the East All reports submitted in the months of April/May 1941 by the Foreign Armies East, the Foreign Air Forces East, the commander of the listening troops East, the commander of the fog troops, the reconnaissance results of Army Group B. 4th Army, the Abwehr, and the reports of Finnish and Japanese reconnaissance culminated in the following statements, which proved an increasing threat situation in the East: 1.1. the increase in the number of divisions to 194 and 196, respectively, in the European part of the Soviet Union; the Red Army has massed in the European part of the Soviet Union, as last reports stated, in a strength of 196 (Document V.77 ) and 194 computed divisions

(Document V.123), respectively, with a total Red Army strength of 229.5 computed divisions (Document V.123) and 232 divisions (Document V.100), respectively, as reported by the Air Staff and based on information from the Eastern Foreign Armies. Almost all reconnaissance information reports newly approached formations as well as their advance towards the border. 1.2. The massing of the Red Army air forces in the border military districts; the deployment of the air forces with 25 air divisions in the European part of the Soviet Union (Document V.l 10), especially the massing in the border military districts with 18 air divisions (Document V.l 11) and 21 air divisions (Document V.l 10), respectively, and in the southwestern direction, was reported with 5,850 fighter planes (Document V.lll). The

formation of fimbombing air corps observed since mid-April 1941, such as the 1st Fimbombing Air Corps in the Leningrad Military District and the 4th in the Odessa Military District (Document V.1 11), which were to enable a closed deployment of these in the depths of the enemy, made clear the long-suspected growing danger of sudden strikes on important German political and armament centers, e.g., also on Petsamo or Ploesti. The report about the advance of parts of the air forces to airfields of the border troops/NKVD near the border (document V.1 13) could be interpreted as a sign of imminent air strikes. 1.3. Concentration of Mechanized Corps; Although the magnitude of the existing (1st to 9th Mechanized Corps) and the new 21 Mechanized Corps of the Red Army established by the decision of 12 February 1941 were still not fully recognized, nevertheless a slowly increasing approach of Mechanized Corps or parts thereof was reconnoitered. Thus, the 1st Mechanized Corps in the Pskov area (Leningrad Military District) (Documents V.no, 119), the 3rd in the Kalvarija area (Baltic Special Military District), and a XXX. Corps (possibly, the 8th), designated as a motorized mechanized group, in the Proskurov area (Kyiv Special Military District) (Document V.1 19). Concentration of armored troops/fast units should have received special attention. 1.4. reconnaissance of the Red Army's operational intentions; a large number of reconnaissance documents noted a growing concentration of Red Army formations in the Kiev Special Military District. Situation Report No. 3 of 28 April 1941 (Document V.77) reported an increase to 58.5 computational divisions. In particular, quite a number of newly appeared formations had been identified in the Lviv bridgehead or in the approach to it (Document V. 113). A denser concentration of air forces (Document V.1 11) in the southwestern direction, increasing radio activity, and the reconnaissance of entire radio networks that indicated command structures were regularly noted. At the same time, there were constant indications of the Red Army's intention to defend itself in the northwest (Baltic Special Military District/Northwest Front), as in the enemy situation report of Army Group North of 05 May 1941 (Document V.109), according to the testimony of a Lithuanian officer (Document V.1 19, Annex 1.), by noting a high number of material transports in this direction and an exceptionally active engineer buildup, even the relatively small number of concentrated divisions. The conspicuous concentration of large contingents of the Red Army in the frontal baikons of Bialystok and, above all, Lviv, or in the direction of these, in conjunction with the statement that the Red Army planned to advance in the. The fact that the Red Army was planning to fight in the Lithuanian and Polish directions only with restraint, even allowed conclusions to be drawn regarding the Red Army's operational planning, if the entirety of the reconnaissance data was carefully evaluated. According to Stalin's directive of October 5, 1940, the Red Army planned to conduct a strategic defensive against East Prussia and northern Poland, as well as to attack the southern flank of the Bialystok salient and the Lviv salient. the frontal salient of Lviv to open the offensive to Germany. And no one should claim that the Wehrmacht leadership was not aware of the distribution of the 7: sic formations. Proof is the ratio of forces of the opposite sides expected by the High Command d of the Wehrmacht (Documer V.105) of 01 May 1941, reproduced in the following quote V.128 quote V.128 "2.) Ratio of strength in the case Barbarossa Section north: German and Russian forces about equal Section center: strong German superiority Section south: Russian superiority. " Despite these findings available to the high commands, the operational intentions of the Red Army were not clearly recognized everywhere, as the formulation in the enemy situation report of Army Group C "The distribution of forces to date Lt not yet permit any conclusion as to special operational intent." (Document V.109) suggests. Let us hold, then, that the reconnaissance results of individual Army Groups, in view of their spatially limited reconnaissance area, cannot be equated with the findings of the highest levels of military command. 1.5. the implementation of a covered partial mobilization and the establishment of the Red Army's wartime structures; The noted continuation of the call-up of approximately 500,000 reservists through suspicious individual call-ups and the early call-up of reservist

year groups (Doloument V.1 19) proved the Red Army's intensive preparation for military conflict. It was also correctly recognized that the Red Army was preparing for the initiation of a general and open mobilization in advance of its planned offensive so as not to expose this intention. Constantly, other units in the division of the war were fixed.l: (Funklagermeldung May 1941.). A whole series of further information about current developments in the Soviet Union, which announced the approach of a war against Germany, or at least had to be followed with attention, as the entries in the war diaries and the abundance of reconnaissance information prove, could not be overlooked. Thus the message of Heusinger on 03 May 1941 "Army Group B. Russian aircraft: over German territory." which confirmed the increase in airspace violations by Red Army air forces,200 the issuance of a ban on entry of foreigners and locals into the border districts on 19. May 1941,201 the transfer of the German population to Inner Russia, the increase in border violations, the relocation of factories from the border area and preparations for the repatriation of livestock and the destruction of grain stocks, the development of a wartime mood in the Red Army, the intensive conduct of war games by command bodies and exercises by Red Army units, the spread of the opinion that war with the Germans was coming, and so on. etc. allowed the Wehrmacht to draw conclusions about the determination of the USSR to wage war against Germany. 2 Hitler's and the Wehrmacht's reactions May 1941 As the above-mentioned documents prove, Hitler and the high commands of the Wehrmacht and the Wehrmacht components were always up to date on the development of the situation in the East. Among other things, the extensive distribution of the very detailed situation reports of the Luftwaffe command staff, which were submitted daily, proves that all Wehrmacht parts were informed about the development of the situation. Thus, the Adjutant of the Wehrmacht to Hitler, the Wehrmacht Command Staff, the Commanders-in-Chief of the Army and the Air Force received these reports. The war diaries of the high commands of the Wehrmacht and the Army clearly prove it: In view of this recognized and daily escalating threat situation, considerations about the necessity of carrying out Barbarossa were no longer at the center of the work of the high commands and of Halder's deliberations, but were regarded as a now established fact. Also, Hitler's decision had obviously been made, as can be seen from the communication of the High Command of the Wehrmacht of 01 May 1941 (Document V.105). The conviction of the Red Army's intention to attack is also reflected in the documents prepared for the conduct of talks with Finland, as evidenced by Enclosure 1 to the Meeting Note for the Consultation of the Chief of the Wehrmacht Joint Staff with the Representatives of Finland of 01 May 1941: Quote V.129 (excerpt from document V.108) " 1.) The Russian intention to attack, which is evident from the massing of the Russian Army on the German-Russian border, compels the German Reich to take countermeasures in the event that Russia should carry out its plans of attack. 2) In this case, there is the intention to anticipate the Russian plans by attackingf The following chain of episodes also has probative value: Hitler obviously believed he had to reassess the situation, as evidenced by the demand recorded in the war diary on May 11, 1941: "0 KW yesterday announced that Fuehrer wants overview of Russian buildup, divided by quarter. " 282 In a holistic assessment of the situation, the available reports on the escalation on the Russian side of 28 April 1941 (196 divisions in the western military districts (Document V.77) and their comparison with that in the deployment precis of 12 May 1941 (72 divisions (Document V.77 ) including only 2 armored divisions and as yet no bomber forces), the precarious situation of the Wehrmacht in the east became clear, especially since the deployment on the northern flank (only the 169th Division for lack of forces) and on the southern flank (11th Army) could not be started until May 1941 because of the necessity of the Balkan campaign. In view of this situation, the concern that Stalin's offensive might forestall a preemptive strike by the Wehrmacht, which was becoming increasingly urgent, is understandable. Hitler's letter to Stalin of May 14, 1941 (quoting V.1 15) must be mentioned

as one of the results of this renewed assessment of the situation, since a necessary acceleration of the Wehrmacht's deployment was also deemed impossible. Undoubtedly, Hitler's letter to Stalin is to be classified in the strategic operation to disinform the enemy side, as, in accordance with this, the instruction of May 25, 1941 (Document V.117) on the further pretense of the forthcoming Operation "Sea Lion" in the West demands. "Sea Lion Preparation:", in the West "of 01 May 1941. 203 Due to the initially difficult situation on Crete, a postponement of the date for Barbarossa was even considered on 22 May 1941. 204 However, since it was reported that the transport movements for Barbarossa were going well and that the landing on Crete was successful, Hitler decided on 30 May 1941, in view of the expected developments in the East, to stick to 22 June 1941. 205 The work of the High Command of the Wehrmacht in preparation for Barbarossa was further characterized by: O the continuation of the deployment for Barbarossa (17,000 platoons) by the beginning of the maximum performance schedule (Staffel 4a) from 22. O the organization of the return march of the Balkan troops, their refreshment, and their readiness for Barbarossa; O the consultation and further specification of the Army's jump division required by the development of the situation; O the preparation of the deployment of the reserves; O the clarification of the use of the coastal artillery withdrawn from the west for Barbarossa; O the assessment of the motor vehicle situation and the deployment of the supply troops, clarification of the securing and supply questions by supply trains as of 24 June 1941; and O the provision of the supply trains as of 24 June 1941. June 1941 and the provision of low-loader trailers; O organization of railroad air protection at Barbarossa and provision of the necessary batteries, etc. This list alone, taken from the war diaries, proves that there was now an obviously unalterable decision to carry out an advance strike of the Wehrmacht against the Soviet Union. On May 31, 1941, the order for Luftwaffe aircraft not to fly into the ordered 30-km-wide exclusion strip west of the German-Russian demarcation line was rescinded. 206 In the month of May 1941, the High Commands of the Wehrmacht had to deal with other tasks that were by no means incidental, such as: O the conduct of the naval and air warfare in the west against England; O the conduct of mock actions of a Wehrmacht landing in England; O the deployment of parachute and airborne troops on Crete, their reinforcement and supply; O the organization of fighting in North Africa, air and ship transports; O the consideration of the seizure of Malta; O the support of Iraq by arms and ammunition deliveries via the Baghdad Railway, and so forth.

V.5 June 1941 The reconnaissance of the forthcoming offensive of the Red Army; the completion of the preventive preparation of the Wehrmacht June 1941 The continuation of the offensive march of the Red Army Significantly, despite Hitler's information in the letter personally addressed to Stalin on May 14, 1941, "Expected June 15-20, I plan to begin the massive transfer of troops from your border to the west." (Quoting V.l 15), Stalin now pursued the Red Army's further offensive preparations with extraordinary intensity. 207 On 09 June 1941, a top-secret 5:25-hour consultation took place between Stalin and the military officers Timoshenko, Zhukov, and Vatutin, with the participation of responsible officials. Since minutes of this consultation have not been found to this day, or no minutes have been taken, it is reasonable to assume that it was about the decision to carry out the offensive to Germany. The preliminary order of June 11, 1941, as well as all subsequently initiated measures for the further deployment of the Red Army confirm this assumption. 208 This further development of the Red Army's deployment in June 1941 was characterized by the following features: □ While in the vicinity of the border and in the 1st operational line of the I Strategic Squadron everything possible, including the repatriation of pre-bounced units of the Kiev Special Military District ordered by Zhukov, was undertaken to obscure 209 the danger looming for Germany, the deployment in the depths of the country continued at an accelerated pace. Evidence is the covered advance of the Mechanized Corps of the Kiev Special Military District in the form of wandering camps as of June 10, 1941. The depth echelon of the Mechanized Corps of 20 to 170 km, mentioned in Table V.130 below, proves the corps

were on the march. 216 O On June 11, 1941, a preliminary order is said to have been issued by Tymoshenko in which he instructed the front, army, and corps staffs to establish readiness for carrying out offensive actions. A similar order was apparently issued by the USSR People's Commissar for the Naval Fleet, overheard by the Finnish listening service and communicated to the German naval command on June 13, 1941. Evidence is the new activities of the Russian naval fleet noted<sup>1</sup> as of 12 June 1941. 211 O

Also on 11 June 1941, the connection with the preliminary order becoming clear, the advance of rifle divisions and air squadrons from the depths of the border military districts toward the border was ordered. The aviation squadrons of the Kiev Special Military District were ordered to complete the transfer over a distance of 380–510 km to the forward positions (30 to a maximum of 210 km from the border) by June 25, 1941. 212 O On June 12, 1941, the commander-in-chief of the Kiev Special Military District was informed of the approach and redeployment of the 16th Army from Femost under his command. 213 The arrival of the 16th Army (in the inventory 5th Mechanized Corps (13th and 17th Armored Divisions, 109th Motorized Rifle Division), 57th Armored Division, and 32nd Rifle Corps (46th and 152nd Rifle Divisions) took place in the Shepetovka-Proskurov-Berdichev area from 15 June 1941. O While the divisions of the frontier military districts near the border were ordered to remain in place, directives of June 13–15, 1941, brought forward the rifle corps directly subordinated to the frontier military districts (Kiev Special Military District: 31., 36th, 37th, 49th, 55th Rifle Corps; Western Special Military District: 2nd, 21st, 44th, 47th Rifle Corps) in full secrecy and only at night, taking with them all reserves of ammunition and fuel and lubricants, but without their families. 214 – In the last pre-war days, particularly in implementation of Watutin's calculations of 13 June 1941, determinations were made to reinforce the troops of the main direction southwest, which resulted in a series of maneuvers of the onrushing units of the II Strategic Squadron. 215 D After reconnaissance of the increasing danger of an attack by the Wehrmacht preceding its own offensive advance, especially by the reconnaissance organs of the covering armies, a series of defensive measures were initiated, mainly at the insistence of the military leaders, within the framework of a dual strategy, which the established historiography likes to propagate as an expression of a defensive strategy of the Red Army. For example, although rejected by the General Staff for 6 to 7 months, the advance of several rifle divisions to close gaps at the roots of the Bialystok frontal balcony (the 56th and 85th Rifle Divisions in the Grodno direction and the 75th and, somewhat later, the 113th Rifle Division in the Brest direction) took place in late May/early June 1941, as did further measures to increase the combat readiness of the previously neglected fortified areas on June 16, 1941. 216 D On 21 June 1941, the formation of the Southern Front, in the inventory the 9th and 18th Armies, took place with the aim of relieving the Southwest Front, which had to perform the main task in the upcoming offensive into the depths of Germany, and at the same time to counter the perceived danger of an advance strike by the Wehrmacht from Romanian territory. Stalin and the General Staff of the Red Army probably believed that the staff of the southwestern front would have been completely overtaxed if the planned large-scale offensive in the southwestern direction and the defensive in the southern direction had been conducted in parallel. 217 03/05 June 1941 Alarming Radio Situation Reports The reports submitted daily in June 1941 by the commander of the listening troops east confirmed the continuation of this gigantic deployment of the Red Army, as evidenced by the following radio situation map as of 01 June 1941. This submitted radio situation map is of interest in several respects: – The newly established formations (drawn in black) accumulated in the Kiev Special Military District and especially in the frontal salient of Lviv, but also in that of Bialystok, while in the Baltic Special Military District such a concentration of new formations near the border could not be established. – The new detection of radio stations in the area of Shepetovka-Tarnopol-Vinnitsa, which, however, could not be assigned yet, designates exactly that area

where the 16th Army from Femost was concentrated from June 15, 1941. So it could have been pre-commandos of the 16th Army, the main thrust of the Kiev Special Military District/Southwest Front. And the area southwest of Minsk-Ivanovo was the concentration area of the 13th Army of the Western Special Military District/the Western Front. Regarding the assessment of the accuracy of the information about the Red Army reported by the Horchdienst Ost, the following message of 05 June 1941 (Document V.l32) is highly interesting. Of the 53 reconnoitered staffs and units of the land and air forces mentioned in this document on pages 3-6, all 53 were found to be correctly assigned to military districts after verification

and comparison with Russian documents. Since the report contained only the radio stations or networks established by multiple traffic evaluations during the last few days (26 May to 03 June 1941), this must be judged an excellent listening result. An interesting report for the operational evaluators in the Army High Command was submitted by the commander of the Eastern listening troops on 06 Jun: 1941. A radio network with 4 to 6 radio stations in the Augustow area, 30 krr south of Suwalki, was newly determined. According to the contents of the message and traffic characteristics, it was a divisional radio network of a newly arriving division. As is known today, according to Russian documents, at the end of May/An fangjimi 1941, within the framework of the double strategy, the deployment of additional rifle divisions took place at the hitherto inadequately secured roots of the frontal balcony of Bialystok. It does not survive whether the evaluators understood this message in the same way. The radio situation report of 12 June 1941, compiled by traffic evaluations, essentially confirmed the report of 05 June 1941 and provided further details on the locations of the corps and divisions of the land forces. Again~ 28 divisions of the Air Forces in the Western Military Districts, of which: 24 in the Frontier Military Districts, could be confirmed, although for three divisionei of the Baltic Special and two of the Leningrad Military Districts, Spruch documents had been missing since the end of Ma. Newly enlightened was the 62nd Close Bombing Divisio: of the Kiev Special Military District in Sarny, On June 19, 1941, it was found that in the Russian radio network traffic was conducted in English. An unusual phenomenon! 01 June 1941 Reconnaissance of the occupation of the ground organization of the air forces of the Red Army An analysis of the reconnaissance documents submitted by the Foreign Air Forces East on 01/22 June 1941 allows the following assessment: the listening troops cleared up 99 airfields occupied by 3,501 aircraft (document V.l33). while by the image reconnaissance which had got under way 119 airfields occupied by 2,010 aircraft could be cleared up. The deviating results can be explained by the different reconnaissance depth and the different technical possibilities. Image reconnaissance could only cover a strip with a depth of up to about 300 km, but had the possibility to detect many newly established operational airfields close to the border, even if they were not yet occupied by aircraft, which could not be detected by radio reconnaissance because these usually acted as silent airfields for camouflage reasons. For radio reconnaissance, on the other hand, occupied airfields could be intercepted by the air operations service with a high degree of certainty throughout the depth of the border military districts, and under favorable conditions throughout the entire European part of the Soviet Union. 01 June 1941 Issue of an Information Booklet on Red Army Tank Types The following information, which was issued only on 01 June 1941 and must therefore be understood as current, on the most important armored fighting vehicles available in the Red Army must be judged to be of little informative value to the troops. In total, 11 types of tanks of the Red Army were presented in this information, including some American types. The most modern tanks of the Red Army, the medium tank T-34 and the heavy tank KW, were not mentioned. In the four tank groups of the Wehrmacht the Panzer III (with 966 pieces the most important tank of the Wehrmacht in the initial period of the German-Russian war) and the Panzer IV (439 pieces) formed the main types of tanks used in the East. The comparison of the tactical-technical data of the medium tanks T-34 with the Panzer

IIIJ presented in the following table shows the absolute superiority of the T-34 in terms of mobility (power, range), armor and armament. During the period from 22 June to 10 July 1941, 1588 T-34 and KW tanks were in action on the northwest, western, and southwest fronts (including the southern front). 223 Significantly, the Red Army's Southwest Front alone had 752 T-34s and KWs in its inventory. 224 The fact that the troops received no indication of these modern Red Army tank types is clearly evidenced by descriptions in a whole series of memoirs. For example, a P IV commander of the experience generation writes of his first losing encounter with the Red Army's T-34 tanks: quote V.137 "With eyes wide open, Blaich stares at the enemy tanks. They suddenly seem to him like invulnerable giants. Their tracks overbroad and the superstructures amazingly low. Add to that the barrels of their cannon. The first sergeant's whole body suddenly breaks out in a sweat as he estimates the caliber of the tank guns. These are at least 7 cm tubes. Christ, it must really be a new type, a tank against which the PIV can no longer stand a chance." 225 On this basis was

difficult to make a forward-looking assessment of the true fighting power of the Red Army's tank weapon. Nevertheless, as his remark at the General Assembly of 30 March 1941 "... small number of new giant types with long 10 cm K (Riesenkolosse 42-451)" (quote V.49) indicates, Hitler seems to have had further information from an unknown source. Of some importance is the remark of Halder of 04 June 1941: .... Russ. Panzer tactics: tank use in small (counterattack and counterattack) and large (new!). Panzerjäger (possibly also rear Divn.) to the front." 226 At least this remark shows that the Army High Command had recognized the destiny of the newly created Red Army Mechanized Corps and was counting on tank advances into operational depth. 03 June 1941 Abwehr Report on English Intelligence Activities This task statement attests to the uncertainty of English intelligence regarding Hitler's further intentions. As Table V.I 39 below shows, more divisions were moved to the west than to the east with the beginning of the Wehrmacht's buildup in the east. As early as 05 May 1941, Halder was able to record in a briefing: "Englishman reacts to our troop movements to the west and expects imminent attack." 229 According to the OKW directive of 25 May 1941 (Document V.I 17), orders were again given to continue mock attack preparations against England with special emphasis. In England, too, the article "Crete as an Example," launched by Goebbels in the Völkischer Beobachter of June 13, 1941, was noticed. In particular, the immediate confiscation of the issue, which was done on Hitler's personal instructions, caused a stir. As a result, Goebbels noted in his diary, "Yesterday: my article on Crete.... a real sensation in the country and abroad"™ In view of this and many other activities of the Wehrmacht within the framework of the strategic operation for disinformation, which in any case did not remain hidden from English and also Russian intelligence, the high interest of English intelligence in the direction of the Wehrmacht's troop movements is understandable. All this also came to the attention of Stalin. 03 June 1941 Report on the preparation of the Red Army for gas warfare The warnings regularly received from the Chief of the Fog Troops in the Army High Command about the Red Army's gas warfare preparations were to be taken quite seriously and made clear the extraordinary developing danger of waging a gas war in the East. That these ascertained reconnaissance results of the Chief of the Fog Troops in the Army High Command were also understood in this way is proved by the note of Colonel General Halder for the meeting with the Chiefs of the Eastern Front of 04 June 1941. Quote V.I 41 b) Gas use. I expect Ab spraying and local poisoning [by the Russians]. We must not allow the enemy time for gas use on a large scale. Large-scale operation only possible after 7 days using special transport space." 232 Apparently Halder considered these messages from the Chief of the Fog Troops about the preparation of a gas war by the Red Army to be so urgent that they were disseminated as early as 10 June 1941 by the issue of a leaflet (Document V.I42) for the Eastern Troops. A check of this information with Russian documents essentially confirmed the accuracy of this reconnaissance information, although it must be assumed that these structures had not yet been enforced in all units. In

this connection, the author also refers to the report of the Horchdienst of 28 April 1941 on the delivery of poison gas to various air squadrons. 05 June 1941 Precised schedule of the march Barbarossa After approval by Hitler, Keitel laid down on 05 June 1941 the time schedule for the further march of the Wehrmacht for Barbarossa. This timetable Barbarossa of 05 June 1941 clarifies like no other document the state of preparation and implementation of the march of the Wehrmacht in the East. It is significant to note that as of 01 June 1941, only 80 divisions, including 3 armored divisions, of the Wehrmacht were in the east. With the start of Squadron 4b from 01 June 1941, the focus of the first part was the transport of Luftwaffe components, and only from about 10 June 1941 was the transport of the fast formations, the armored and motorized infantry divisions, planned. This planning envisaged having 127 divisions of the Wehrmacht (including the 4 divisions in Norway) available in the east on the day of the attack. The latest halting date of the attack was set for 21 June 1941, 13.00 hours, and the halting signal "Altona". 07 June 1941 Reconnaissance of the Red Army on the border with Romania Here an extraordinarily significant reconnaissance information was presented. The statements of this reconnaissance information should be appreciated by the following assessment: 1. The strength of the Red Army troops stationed on the border with Romania and Hungary was 1t. a planning of 11 March 1941 18 calculation divisions (Table V. 145). The General Staff of the Red Army had assigned to the units of the 18th Army (5 rifle divisions) and those of the 9th Army (8 rifle, 2 tank, 1 mot. rifle, and 2 cavalry divisions) the task of safely defending the border with Hungary and Romania (Wo roch ta-Black Sea section). The number of Red Army units assumed by the Wehrmacht to be stationed in the south direction was thus too high, since it was evidently not fully realized that the deployment of a number of units in the ordered direction of the Red Army's main effort, the southwest direction, was planned. Thus, a tank corps was recognized at Chernoviz. 2. also, the realization was confirmed that, on the basis of the individual convocations already under way for some time, a replenishment of the Red Army to wartime strength had been achieved, so that an overall mobilization would no longer be necessary. The logical conclusion was: "In view of the overall picture and the speed of the Russian measures carried out, it must be assumed that the Red Army will not be able to continue the war. Measures, it must be assumed that the Russian Army was ready for offensive action at the end of June. Army can be ready for offensive action at the end of June (earliest date)." How true! According to knowledge of Russian documents, the opening of the Red Army offensive was planned for about July 10, 1941 3. Also unmistakable was the phrase used in the reconnaissance information, "It forms an essential reinforcement of border security and thus constitutes good protection for a deployment," which gave an important indication of the purpose of the new construction of emplacements along the German-Russian border of interest and on the new Hungarian and Romanian-Russian borders. Although in accordance with Stalin's demand of 05 October 1940 to defend in the north, northwest and south, this above-mentioned purpose of covering the deployment of the units of the Southwest Front (Kiev Special Military District) against the south has been quite correctly established. This also refutes such a view that the expansion of the positions near the border proves the defensive intention of the Red Army. 4 The use of chemical warfare agents on a large scale by the Red Army must be expected. Also, the statement of the defected lieutenant 5. nant about the equipment of the air forces with chemical warfare containers has already been confirmed by the Wehrmacht's Hearing Service East. 08 June 1941 Updated Reconnaissance Information of the Foreign Armies East for Army Group B On 08 June 1941, the Foreign Armies East informed Army Group B about the current enemy situation in the east. The reconnaissance information for Army Group B of 08 June 1941 can be assessed as follows: 1. A considerable increase in the total strength of the Teihnobilized Red Army from 200.5 (on 13 February 1941) to 231.5 computational divisions on 08 June 1941 was noted. In the war against Germany, 166 divisions of the Red Army (Table V.147) were now expected, still an increase of 13-16% in comparison

with the figure established on February 13, 1941, which proves that the deployment of the Red Army and its massing not far from the demarcation line continued vigorously in the spring of 1941. In pt. 4.) it was stated that to secure the further borders of the USSR remained 66.5 calculation divisions. In fact, a calculation by Watutin on June 13, 1941, provided for leaving 66 divisions and 2 brigades on these frontiers. It could not be cleared up that the General Staff of the Red Army planned, in case of favorable development of the situation, to withdraw another 33 divisions from these borders and to move them to the west, for which 1,700 transport trains were calculated. The deployment of the combat units to the western theater of war should be possible within about 10 days.<sup>239</sup> In front of the front of Army Group Center, which was to attack in the strip Allenstein-Lötzen (northern border) and Radom-Włodawa (southern border), the 3rd, 4th, 10th, and 13th Armies as well as the 11th Army, which, however, belonged to the Baltic Special Military District, were determined and 54 calculation divisions were identified. In fact, Army Group Center faced 44 divisions (plus about 5–6 divisions in the 11th Army strip), or about 50 Red Army divisions at the time of this reconnaissance information (08 June 1941) (excluding II and III Strategic Squadrons). A good reconnaissance result. The directives for the deployment of the II Strategic Squadron were issued on 13 May 1941.

Arrival in the ordered areas took place only from 17 June (21st Army), 24 June (22nd Army) and 25 June (20th Army). There was no information about this in the reconnaissance information for the Army Group 2. the reconnaissance information again confirmed that the Foreign Armies East, despite the realization of a high number of tanks, gave a false estimate of the structures of the Red Army's armored and mechanized forces. Also with regard to 3. the deployment of these troops, essentially conjectures were reported. At least, however, an attempt to group the armored forces along German lines was recognized, although it was surmised that their use for an operational task, breaking through a strong defense and for long-range attack operations in depth, was unlikely. A total of 4,200 aircraft were assumed in the western border military districts. The Western Special Military District was indicated as the center of gravity for the deployment of air forces. Referring to the results of radio surveillance, 2,600 fighter and reconnaissance aircraft and 900 fighter aircraft of the Red Army were reconnoitered in front of Army Group Center and the Air Fleet. On 01 June 1941, radio reconnaissance (Document V.133) had still reported 871 aircraft in the Western Special Military District and on 10 June 1941 (Document V.148) a total inventory 3,635 aircraft in the Western Frontier Military Districts. The information about a total of 8 divisions with 32 artillery regiments did not coincide with reality. The reserve of the Supreme Command of the Red Army amounted to 74 artillery regiments. In addition, there were another 94 cannon artillery regiments, i.e. 168 regiments. Correctly recognized was the high importance assigned to the parachute and airborne troops of the Red Army. However, it was not enlightened that by the decision of 23 April 1941<sup>240</sup> an entire airborne corps (the 4th, in the inventory 3 airborne brigades) of a total of 5 airborne corps was newly established in the Western Special Military District. However, jump training for the two paratrooper brigades newly established in the Western Special Military District did not begin until 01 June 1941.<sup>241</sup> The presence of extensive "gas troops" in Red Army structures and many reconnaissance reports suggested an impending gas war (Documents V.140, 144). With regard to the fortifications near the border and in depth reported in the information, the connection with the Handbook on Land Fortifications (Document V.12) of March 15, 1941, issued in the month of March, becomes clear. It was confirmed once again that in the vicinity of the border only border fortifications (barbed wire and watchtowers) were erected, in the northern area several defense lines (Njemen-Venta line) were established also using the former Polish defense line, while a further extension of the so-called Stalin line (the defense line) did not take place. Despite some reconnaissance results established with today's knowledge only approximately correct, this information of 08 June 1941 was by no means a reassuring statement about the development of the growing danger in the East.<sup>10</sup>

June 1941 Reconnaissance of the densification of the offensive grouping of the air forces of the Red Army An extraordinarily significant document was presented by the Air Force Joint Staff in the form of a summarized report of the Wehrmacht's image and radio reconnaissance on 10 June 1941. In comparison with the report of 01 June 1941, an incredible condensation of the forward groupings of the air forces has been noted. Nearly all of the air squadrons deployed in the border military districts were moved westward. Also evident here are the different capabilities of picture reconnaissance (177 places) and radio reconnaissance (104 places). Since a decentralization of the air forces of the Red Army had not yet been ordered, unoccupied airfields (operational airfields without securing units and without flight operations service, silent airfields) could not be determined by radio reconnaissance. Nevertheless, within the 50 km strip along the border, the following differentiated situation is recognizable on the basis of this map (according to computer evaluation): O In the Baltic Special Military District there is a lack of strong occupancy of airfields near the border. Only 1 airfield in this strip was identified as occupied. The buildup of air force grouping in greater depth of the military district could be interpreted as defense grouping. O In the Western Special Military District, on the other hand, an exceedingly heavy occupancy of airfields in this strip, some of them in the immediate vicinity of the border, could be detected as early as 10 June 1941. Thus, 9 airfields were recognized as occupied or heavily occupied. In this military district the air forces were unfolded to a pure attack grouping. Obviously, the first line airfields were also taken too early. Ultimately, the huge losses of the Western Front in the first days of the war, including aircraft, led to the replacement and firing of the Commander-in-Chief of the Military District/Western Front, Army General Pavlov. O In the Kiev Special Military District, as of June 10, 1941, a large number of airfields in the immediate vicinity of the border were still reported as unoccupied

or under construction, since the instructions to further advance some air squadrons to forward positions were not issued until June 11. Only 3 airfields were reported as occupied or heavily occupied in the 50 km strip. Thus, on Zhukov's instructions, the commander-in-chief of the military district also had to immediately lead back some units that had been brought forward too early. As is known today, Stalin feared provoking Hitler by early actions and thereby disrupting his alleged planning of a landing in England. No one should claim that the experienced evaluators in the Luftwaffe High Command did not recognize these above signs as indications of the Red Army's operational intentions. 11 June 1941 Increasing Realizations by Halder of the Need for Prevention The month of June 1941 is characterized primarily by workmanlike activity on the part of the Chief of Staff of the Army High Command, to whom it had evidently become clear that the campaign against the Soviet Union had become inevitable. Significant are a number of signals about the growth of new reconnaissance results. Thus, among other things, the substantial increase in the number of reconnoitered armored divisions and mot.mech. brigades as well as shock groupings in the reconnaissance documents of the last few weeks, which suggested that these armored and motorized forces were not simply "small-scale" but also dangerous shock forces, i.e., "large-scale (new!)" (Quote V.149) were to be expected, as Halder had to state to the chiefs of the Eastern troops on 04 June 1941. Quote V.149 ff) Russ. Panzer tactics: tank use in small (counterattack and counterattack) and large (new!). Tank destroyers (possibly, also rear Divn.) to the front." 244 Further reports in June 1941 were by no means to have contributed to a calming of the situation: 245 05 June Hitler's worries that Crete could serve as an example for air landings ( Russians in Romania but also English on the Channel Islands); 06 June observation of increasing Russian air activity in the eastern area; 06 June increasing Russian unrest on the border with Romania; 07 June observation of gaps in Rowehl long-range reconnaissance in the Kowno area. The seriousness with which the escalating situation in the east was recognized in the Army High Command can be seen in the following partial situation map of 11 June 1941 (Document V.150). 11 June 1941 Assessment of the offensive

buildup of the Red Army in the Army High Command on the basis of a situation map Already the reconnaissance of the Brest-Suwalkizipfel section by the Chief of the General Staff of the High Command of the Wehrmacht on 9 June 1941 proves that the explosiveness of this area was recognized, especially since the main thrust of Army Group Center was to take place in this area. In the following excerpt from the situation map of June 11, 1941, the huge concentration of Red Army formations in offensive formation in the frontal salient of Bialystok can be seen by any reader, while the occupation in the Baltic Special Military District was much smaller. Every experienced general staff in the Army High Command should have read in this map as in a book. This dangerous development was also recognized in the High Command of the Wehrmacht and by Hitler. Thus, on June 20, 1941, Halder recorded in the war diary: "a) Führer's points of concern: areas west of Augustow, Romania. Augustow: Deployment SS and Brig. 900." In this enlarged excerpt, the high concentration of Red Army units in the bridgehead of Bialystok is clearly visible. A good reconnaissance result of the Wehrmacht in terms of the number of divisions, if one disregards the number of panzer divisions noted. While in the Baltic Special Military District an operational density of 7.0 km/division could be established on the basis of this situation map (in reality it was 10.4 km/division, since an excessive number of divisions (34.5 instead of 23) was reported), the operational density in the Western Special Military District was about 7.8. 248 At this early date (11 June 1941), these figures (excluding II and III Strategic Squadrons) already pointed to the capture of an attack starting position in the Bialystok bridgehead, since the extraordinary massing of Russian formations in the bridgehead was unmistakable in the Army High Command as a warning signal to prepare for a Russian

Offensive was unmistakable. Of course, in view of the weakness of reconnaissance in relation to the real number of mechanized corps/tank divisions of the Red Army and taking into account the fact that the advance of the shock forces took place only from June 11, 1941, under the strictest secrecy and in absolute radio silence, the full magnitude of the danger emanating from the mechanized corps could not yet be fully appreciated. June 1941 Romania Enemy Situation, Instructions for Defense The instruction of the Commander-in-Chief of the German Army Forces in Romania to the German Army Mission of 03 June 1941 (Document V.152) is clearly laid out in anticipation of a Russian attack on the defenses of Romania. Such formulations as "...in the event of a Russian attack .... is secured against an enemy attack." "... Preparation of the Pruth bridges for blasting "It is therefore necessary to hold the fortified sections and points of the terrain. "... Smash any attack in unbroken defensive fire in front of the main battle line ..." or "... Repel incursion of enemy in strong counteroffensive ..." prove it. This map shows the planned locations of the units of the 11th German Army (light blue entries) as well as of the Romanian troops (black entries on the border of Romania to Bessarabia occupied by the Soviet Union. At the time of the preparation of this map, only the 22nd, 170th and 198th Infantry Divisions had already arrived, while the remaining divisions of the Wehrmacht were to arrive only in the course of June 1941 (Document V.14). The structure of the joint grouping proves the defensive mission initially given to it for the protection of Romania and the Ol area of Ploesti.... The enemy situation (Document V.144) of 07 June 1941, which had been reconnoitered vis-à-vis Romania, was explained above.

Although the Southwest Front of the Red Army in the operational plan of 15 May 1941 (at the earliest) was given the task of driving the main blow in the Krakow direction and capture the Krakow-Kattowitze-Kielce areas, the plan continues to say: citation V.154 „w) reliably defend the state border with Hungary and Romania and be ready to conduct concentric strikes against Romania from the Chernovtsi and Kishinev spaces, with the next objective to smash the northern wing of the Romanian army and advance to the river Moldova, Jassy." 251 Since German reconnaissance, also using Romanian reconnaissance reports, had established a concentration of about 28.5 to 32.5 calculation divisions (Document V.144), the assumption of a Red Army thrust also against Romania and the

instructions to prepare defensive measures (Documents V.152, 155) against an expected Red Army attack was a logical consequence. In view of this instruction, which clearly laid down measures for the defense of Romania and especially of the Ol area of Ploesti, which was vital for the Wehrmacht, in anticipation of a Russian attack, any discussion of whether there was a threat situation for Germany is superfluous. Also the argument used that ".... Russia is seeking to exploit Germany's commitment in the struggle against England this year to gain the long-sought Carpathian frontier by attacking the Moldau " shows the extensive enforcement of the idea of landing in England as part of the II stage of the strategic operation for disinformation. 13 June 1941 Situation Report No. 5 of the Foreign Armies East This situation report clearly revealed, as did many documents before it, the offensive intentions of the Red Army Situation Report No. 5 of 13 June 1941 can be summarized as follows: 1 . Situation Report No. 5 proves that the reconnaissance organs of the Wehrmacht were closely following developments on the Soviet side. Again, Fremden Heere Ost noted the continuation of the Red Army's buildup, whose strength in the European part/the western border area of the Soviet Union now reached 201.5 calculation divisions in the following composition: citation V.1 57 The total strength of the Red Army in the European part of the USSR has increased by 5 Schütz. Div., 2 PzDiv. and 1 Pz. (mot.mech.) Brig. Gen. Replenishment 15025 V2738increased." 254 Situation Report No. 3 of 28 April 1941 (Document V.77) still reported 166 divisions in the European part of the Soviet Union. A comparison of the abundance of the formations indicated with corps or division numbers with the documents or published data accessible today proves a high degree of agreement, but also that about 50% of the reconnoitered formations had been forward-deployed from the military districts located in depth to the border military districts. The increase of 35.5 divisions already in the war structure noted in this short period, combined with all other reconnaissance results, should have set all alarm bells ringing in the High Command of the Wehrmacht. The increasing massing of Red Army units in the border military districts, the detection of strong mobile groups, i.e., assault groups, the closing of the units to the border, the expectation of local offensive advances, further transports of troops and materiel in a westerly direction, the continuation of the conscription of reservists to replenish the units to war strength, the creation of a wartime psychosis, preparations for evacuation, the repatriation of officers' families, etc., could not be ignored by the high command. The high commands of the Wehrmacht and the Army could only understand these measures as immediate preparations for war by the Soviet Union. 2. the situation report reported a noted concentration of Gebiigsschiitz divisions (9th, 28th, 44th, 47th, as well as 96th (9th and 44th, however, still called Schützendivisionen)) in the Kiev Special Military District, which allowed certain conclusions to be drawn about the planned thrust. Today we know: In fact, on 23 April 1941, in addition to the mobilization plan of 12 February 1941, in order to implement the strategic objective of the operational plan of 11 March 1941, which envisaged an offensive of the southwestern front across the Carpathians, High/Low Tatras, Slovak Ore Mountains in depth to Vienna (or Berlin or Gdansk, depending on the situation), the number of 3rd Mountain Rifle Divisions was increased from 10 up to now to 19. Due to a lack of time, these mountain rifle divisions were formed by restructuring existing rifle divisions and where their deployment was planned, in the Kiev Special Military District (4 divisions) and the Odessa Military District (1 division).255 The Army High Command was thus able to conclude that the Red Army was planning combat operations in the low mountain regions. The assumption that these divisions were placed under a mountain rifle corps, however, is incorrect, since there was no mountain rifle corps in the Red Army inventory at that time. 4 The regular finding of an excessive number of cavalry divisions in the Red Army inventory was also reflected in the above-mentioned situation report. On June 12, 1941, there were only 9 cavalry and 4 mountain cavalry divisions in the Red Army inventory. The reported 1st, 7th, and 28th Cavalry Divisions had been disbanded and restructured as armored or motorized rifle divisions. However, the

2nd Cavalry Corps, in the inventory the 5th and 9th Cavalry Divisions were correctly assigned to the Odessa Military District. 256 5. An alarmingly larger intelligence gap was revealed by the situation report of the Foreign Armies East of 13 June 1941, still a week before the beginning of the war, on the condition of the Red Army's armored/mechanized forces. The reorganization of the armored forces and formation of 8 mechanized corps, 7 of them in the European part of the Soviet Union, and 2 independent armored divisions ordered by Stalin at the end of May 1940 as a result of the successes of the Wehrmacht's armored forces in the West, was only partially recognized. According to the situation report, only the 1st Mechanized Corps in Pskov (Leningrad Military District), the 2nd (Odessa Military District) and the 3rd (Baltic Special Military District), a number of armored brigades as well as motorized rifle divisions were reconnoitered. Also, the formation of 21 additional Mechanized Corps I. and II. Order in fulfillment of Mobilization Plan 41 of 12 February 1941, the formation of which was to be completed by 01 July 1941 and with 18 in the European part of the Soviet Union, was not ascertained by 13 June 1941. The reconnaissance of the large number of armored/mechanized brigades appears to have been recognized as partially correct, since in addition to the formation of the mechanized corps, the formation of 52 independent armored brigades (of which 25 were to be newly formed) was ordered in the rifle corps, which were considered essential for the armored escort of the attacking rifle corps. These formations and reorganizations were to be completed by 01 June 1941. 257 6. The wording in the situation report, J) Far East: as before." confirms that the approach of troops from the Far East, who received directives to continue the approach from their intermediate stationing areas in the Siberian Military 7th District on 25 May 1941, was not yet recognized, apparently because the unloading of the 16th Army (5th Mechanized and 32nd Rifle Corps) from Femost in the Kiev Special Military District did not begin until 18/19 June 1941. It is incomprehensible, however, that the early indications of the Japanese reconnaissance organs about the transfer of Femost forces to the west, so after the worldwide publication by the newspaper "Domei Zusin", were not followed up on was made.2:c 8 But the situation report also contains other more than outlandish formulations, such as "exchange of formations," "merely detachments," "trips to summer camps," up to the assessment "...viewed broadly, defensive behavior to be expected." Of course, the established historiography celebrates such formulations as evidence that an offensive of the Red Army was not expected. Possibly, unintentionally, Ueberschär speaks the truth here by writing, referring to this Situation Report No. 5: "Viewed broadly," one expected a "defensive behavior" of the Red Army until mid-June 1941." 259 This formulation alone leaves open what was then expected from mid-June 1941? In fact, a temporary defensive behavior of the Red Army was still to be expected until mid-June 1941, since the Red Army's deployment was by no means over. Moreover, in fact, after recognizing a dangerous situation developing due to the arrival of considerable Wehrmacht elements in East Prussia and the Generalgouvernement, a whole series of measures were initiated to strengthen the defenses as part of an incipient dual strategy of the Red Army, which German reconnaissance had recognized.260 These partially contradictory statements about the deployment, redeployment, summer position, etc. of Red Army units can only lead to a correct understanding of the Red Army's offensive preparations in the context of an overall view of the situation reports of the Foreign Armies East of the last few months and all other Wehrmacht reconnaissance documents presented here and in part in excerpts, since otherwise, in view of the conclusion drawn, "... defensive behavior...", one cannot escape the impression that these are false statements by Kinzel. After all, he did not personally sign this situation report either. June 1941 Last Indications of the Impending Russian Offensive; Last Measures of the Wehrmacht before the Start of the Preventive Strike For the staffs of the panzer groups, the release for transfer to the east took place on June 10, 1941. 26 Through the listening service, after June 11, 1941, highly alarming reports were produced, which pointed to the imminent military confrontation and proved the further offensive

advance of the Red Army. As the following few excerpts from the daily reports of the commander of the listening troops show, radio networks and radio stations on the move were detected, such as troop movements in the direction of the border (radio situation report 17/6), conspicuously heavy radio traffic in the Bialystok area (12/6) and in the Kiev Special Military District (15/6, 16/6), newly established radio networks usually with many sub-radio stations, new radio lines between a wide variety of command posts (18/6), the arrival of additional rifle corps in Stanislau (18/6), radio traffic in Uzbek in the Bialystok area (16/6 u. 18/6), etc. On June 13, 1941, Goebbels, no doubt with Hitler's consent, launched an article under the headline "Crete as an Example" in the Berlin edition of the *Völkischer Beobachter* as an allusion to the landing of the Wehrmacht in England, which was supposed to take place in the near future. Above all, however, the immediate confiscation of this issue on "Hitler's personal instructions" caused a considerable stir and made the imminent execution of "Seelöwe" seem credible.<sup>262</sup> As early as June 14, 1941, Goebbels, who himself described his article as a "masterpiece of cunning," was able to record in the diary: Quote V.1S8 "Great! My article is the great sensation in Berlin. The telegrams are coursing to all the capital [!so in the original of the Verf]. The bluff has succeeded completely. The Führer is very happy about it. Jodi is thrilled."<sup>263</sup> There can be no doubt that Goebbels was attempting with this propaganda ploy to once again underscore the credibility of Hitler's letter of May 14, 1941, in which he assured Stalin that the Wehrmacht units stationed in East Prussia and the Generalgouvernement would be withdrawn in the period June 15–20, 1941, for the landing in England. Obviously, in view of the increasing signals about the Red Army's advance, this misleading publication served to gain the necessary time, since, as evidenced by the situation map of 16 June 1941 (Document V. 169), the Wehrmacht's advance had not yet been completed.

11 June 1941 orders of the People's Commissars fir defense and the naval fleet to establish attack and combat readiness of the Red Army and the fleet. On June 13, 1941, the naval warfare command received information from Finnish reconnaissance about an order of the USSR People's Commissar of the Naval Fleet intercepted on June 11, 1941, to the following effect: Quote V.1 59 "Finnish B-Service deciphered June 11 radio message of People's Commissariat, according to which all parts of the fleet are to maintain complete combat readiness until special orders are issued! (It may also be exercise orders)." That these were not practice orders to the naval fleet is proved by the following actions of the ships of the Baltic Red Banner Fleet. Thus, for the first time Russian submarine patrols appeared near Hanko and the training ship "Leningrad-Soviet", which was at sea, received orders to stop sailing. The authenticity of this report from Finnish reconnaissance is also confirmed by Tymoshenko's preliminary order to the Red Army, issued on the same day (11 June 1941), to be "ready to carry out offensive operations."<sup>265</sup> Then, on 14 June 1941, Finnish reconnaissance also reported the laying of a minefield northwest of Tallinn by a Russian destroyer and instructions to announce the positions of Swedish and Finnish ships to the Russian fleet.<sup>266</sup> The following, as well as other reports from the commander of the Eastern listening troops, also indicated increasing activity

by Red Army units. Document V.160 (excerpt of 12 June 1941) I. Radio Networks. The Hetz of the western district of Bialystok ftl conduct conspicuously brisk radio traffic on 12.6. Otherwise no substantial<sup>^</sup> changes or new findings until 12.6, 1200 hours. 14 June 1941 Major meeting of Hitler with the Commanders-in-Chief of the Army Groups, Armies, and Panzer Groups in the Reich Chancellery. After presentations by the Commanders-in-Chief of the Army Groups and Armies, the Commanders of the Panzer Groups, von Falkenhorst on the "Silver Fox" enterprise, Stumpff on the Luftwaffe, and Admiral Schmundt on planning in the Baltic Sea. In a lengthy speech, Hitler again recited his rationale for this campaign, "... that the disintegration of Russia would cause England to give up the fight."<sup>67</sup>, "that the attack on the East was inevitable, that it was necessary to attack now if a Russian attack was to be avoided at an inopportune time" Hitler also stated, however, "... that an Anglo-Russian agreement

had existed for some time that the Soviet Union should march against Germany in order to tie her up in the East and relieve Great Britain." 269 That the Soviet Union would not leave it at this threatening gesture, but would march the Red Army to the offensive, is proved by all available reconnaissance documents. Kesselring also expresses himself in this way. Document V.1 61 "The air-ground organization established in the area near the border and its occupancy, on the other hand, had a decidedly offensive character; they thus also unmasked the Russian army intentions." 270 Hitler's arguments were so convincing to the participating generals and admirals that one of the participants, Vice Admiral Assmann recorded the following: "These explanations had such a resounding and conclusive effect that after the lecture none of the members of the naval warfare command present any longer doubted the absolute necessity of the campaign as a preventive war." 2/1 The advancement of the air squadrons of the Red Army Air Forces and possibly their decentralization was also confirmed by the following message of the listening troops about a radio message of the air department of the border troops/NKVD with Moscow of June 12, 1941, reported on June 15, in which the creation of operational airfields for fast fighter planes and for reconnaissance planes was reported. The following report on the wartime division (Document V.1 63) of the air forces of the Western Special Military District exemplifies the degree of unfolding of the offensive grouping of the Red Army air forces, but also the precision of the reports of the listening troops. The listening troops also recognized from the radio networks of the air forces of the Military District (message of June 15, 1941) that the 42nd Fliegerdivision, a long-range bomber division, although stationed in the area of the Western Special Military District, was not subordinate to the Military District, but to another, though unrecognized, high command. In fact, the 42nd Remote Bombing Division was subordinated to the 3rd Fembomber Corps and, further, to the Administration of the Remote Bombing Forces created by decision of 05 November 1940 274. The aim of this new command structure was to enable the long-range bomber forces to be deployed centrally and in unison to perform strategic tasks in the depths of enemy territory. Economically, however, they still remained with their respective military districts. 16 June 1941 Halder's note on increased naval activity by the Russian Red Banner Fleet in the Baltic Sea "Russian Fleet Battle Area. Russian PatrolActivities Hangö and West Exit Finnish Afertee." "confirmed the message

of Finnish reconnaissance of 13 and 14 June 1941 (Cf. above).<sup>27</sup> On 16 June 1941, on the basis of Hitler's lecture of 14 June, the start of the war was fixed at 0300, but left to the Army Groups to move to attack between 0300 and 0330, depending on local conditions. 276 16 June 1941 Situation of Wehrmacht Units As the following map of the Operations Division of the Army General Staff (Document V.165) shows, the infantry divisions had already moved up along the demarcation line with the Soviet Union and had taken up temporary defensive positions to secure the advance of the armored forces, while the shock forces (the panzer groups and motorized infantry divisions) moved into or were in the process of moving toward the staging areas. Let us assume that Hitler was fully informed about the above mentioned reconnaissance results. Hitler issued the final order to carry out the Wehrmacht's pre-emptive strike on June 17, 1941. However, he kept open the possibility of stopping this pre-emptive strike with the "Altona" signal until June 21, 1941, which was the last date for issuing the "Dortmund" signal to carry out the attack. However, all further reports received by the High Command from all sides, which can be reproduced here only in part, confirmed the reconnaissance data collected so far and did not allow any more to stop the Wehrmacht attack forced by the threatening march of the Red Army. As evidenced by the following listening results, the march of Red Army formations continued intensively. 18 June 1941 Army Group B Additions to the Enemy Situation This last Army Group B reconnaissance information available to the author for all subordinates, dated 18 June 1941, provided information on the total reconnoitered Red Army strength of 237 computational divisions. In the

European part of the Soviet Union 201.5 computation divisions were ascertained, and in Asia 35.5 divisions were still in existence. The reconnaissance of the distribution of the massed Red Army formations according to the directions, especially the strength of the formations in the "Kiev Front", as shown in the following table, should have been of special interest to the Army High Command. This proves that German reconnaissance was aware of the main direction planned by the Red Army General Staff, the southwest direction. However, as evidenced by the many references contained in the reconnaissance documents to date, this was not new knowledge in the Army High Command. It remains incomprehensible, however, that the number of expected armored divisions in the "Kiev front" was dismissed to a question mark. German reconnaissance thus lacked important information about the strike forces of the Red Army's planned southwestern front. As we know today, 12 mechanized corps (in the inventory 25 armored and 12 motorized divisions) (Table V.1 70) of the Red Army were planned in the southwestern direction. r.l H" 1 -7A The partial plan of the war game of the Kiev Special Military District from May 20 to 24, 1941 (documents V.102-104) confirms the planned deployment of these 16 armored divisions in the southwestern front. While these 16 armored divisions and the 4 armored divisions of the Odessa Military District were in the frontier military districts, which should therefore have been detectable by German reconnaissance, the 5 armored divisions of the 16th and 19th Armies, which marched up from the depths of the country at a later date, were certainly not yet detectable. Special attention should also have been paid to the message of 19 June 1941 concerning the conduct of radio communications in English. The status of the Wehrmacht's deployment was assessed by the Operative Department of the Army High Command, as evidenced by the following document V.1 72. At this point it should be recalled that on June 11, 1941, Timoshenko issued an order to move up to the border with rifle corps/rifle divisions and air squadrons. The following reports (documents V.1 73,174,175) of the Horch troops prove that the approach of newly established formations to the border did not remain hidden from German reconnaissance. This report indicates the establishment of a higher level of combat readiness/readiness on ships and defense installations of the ports of the Black Sea Fleet, ordered by the People's Commissar for the Naval Fleet on June 11, 1941. Finnish reconnaissance had informed the Wehrmacht of this intercepted saying on 13 June 1941. 19 June 1941 Preparation of notes to the Foreign Office on the development of the threat from the East Was the German government aware of the threatening nature of the Russian buildup? Warlimont describes a task of a special kind given to Department L of the High Command of the Wehrmacht, an instruction to "compile the border violations and similar violations committed by the Russian Army and Air Force during the past few months in the form of individual notes to the Foreign Office, some of which are backdated." And he continues that the Foreign Office liaison officer to the High Command of the Wehrmacht informed the ChiefL on 19 June "that the Fuehrer last night had instructed the Reich Foreign Minister to comment on the reports of the OKW.... on the Russian border violations to the Führer by this evening, in the sense that the threatening nature of the Russian advance no longer permitted any further hesitation." Further, Warlimont referred to the requested messages as "ZweckMeldungen."<sup>281</sup> Let us therefore look at the messages available in copy (Document V.1 76) and examine their truthfulness. Summary of Information from the High Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Office on the Development of a Threat Situation in the East The attempt to defame these messages by calling them "Zweck-Meldungen" (purpose messages) seems ineffectual, since Warlimont, who coined this term for the messages from the High Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Office in his book "Im Hauptquartier der deutschen Wehrmacht 1939 bis 1945," admits in the following: "To the best of my recollection, the required "Zweck-Meldungen" had essentially adhered to the facts, which were available in abundant numbers."<sup>283</sup> The facts were thus available "in abundant

numbers." The content of the reports thus corresponded to reality, even in the event that they were subsequently compiled. However, there is something to be said for this. Let us examine, then, what the truth content of these reports from the High Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Office was. 1) The border and airspace violations by soldiers and aircraft of the Red Army Air Forces reported in the reports The information on border incidents, for example in Annex 1 of the report of June 20, 1941, which appears to be very specific, proves that the shelling of German territory and of customs officials, refugees and border crossers in provocative form began as early as 1940. Since January 13, 1941, all 6 reports of the High Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Office reported, above all, a large number of airspace violations by Russian aircraft, for example, on April 17, 1941, by eight Russian aircraft alone. For example, Situation Report No. 4 of May 15, 1941 (Document V.l 19) reported a number of border violations. Also, the report to the Foreign Office of June 11, 1941, stated,

"Reconnaissance activity has increased conspicuously and has been carried out in part by the highest officers with large staffs. " This is not surprising, however; after all, this was precisely what the staffs of the armies and the border military districts of the Red Army were ordered to do. Thus, a directive of the General Staff of the Red Army to the Western Special Military District of June 20, 1940, states:

quoteV.177 "The higher leading stock, the staffs of the armies and the district are obliged to study practically, i.e., directly in the field, their theater of war, to uncover characteristic peculiarities of operational directions for the consideration of these in the combat training of the troops. With this aim are to be provided: in all staffs of armies and in the staff of the district, with direct participation and leadership by the military councils of armies and the district, operational reconnaissance of the main directions. ..." The fact that these reconnaissances of the higher leadership and the staffs of the border military districts and armies, combined with tactical reconnaissance and the goal of familiarizing themselves with the Western theater of war, were directly directed against Germany, was further stipulated in the directive of the General Staff of the Red Army. Quote V.1 78 "Special attention is to be paid to the study of Germany and especially East Prussia as a theater of war, the organization of its armed forces, but also to tactical and operational views. " 285 2. The Number of Concentrated Red Army Divisions in the Western Frontier Military Districts of the USSR Reported According to Russian documents, the number of Red Army divisions in the Western Frontier Military Districts in September 1939 was 81.5 divisions. At the end of August 1940 102, in March 1941 156 and in mid-April 1941 170 divisions. To the Foreign Office the High Command of the Wehrmacht reported the following figures: A complete correspondence of the numbers and times of Red Army deployment mentioned in the reports to the Foreign Office with those given by the situation reports of the Foreign Armies East is not possible with respect to each

Number not producible. Regardless of this. Regardless of these findings, the order of magnitude and the tendency of the deployment has been made clear and sufficiently threatening by the High Command of the Wehrmacht. A massive buildup of Russian forces has been noted, especially in East Prussia. In the Suwalki-Memel border section, according to the report to the Reidis Government, 24.5 divisions had been reconnoitered since June 11, 1941, 29.5 divisions in the area around Bialystok, and a reserve army of 11 divisions in the area around Baranovichi (eastward Bialystok), making a total of 65 divisions. In connection with the 2,000 Red Army aircraft detected north of the Pripjet Marshes, it was now assumed that an attack was planned from the east and southeast against the estuaries of the Bug and Narew Rivers and north of Warsaw. Even if the assumption of an offensive against East Prussia no longer corresponded to the current operational plan of 15 May 1941 (at the earliest), for according to this plan a defensive was planned for the northwestern front and the parts of the western front concentrated to the north, while only parts of the western front were to open the offensive in the general direction of Lublin together with the southwestern front. After all, it is significant for our assessment that, according to the

Russian documents, the reconnoitered 65 divisions and 2000 aircraft roughly corresponded to the actual strength of the northwestern and western fronts. In other words, the High Command of the Wehrmacht and thus the Reich Government were informed in detail about the extent of the deployment of the Red Army formations and their concentration in the border area.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, the Foreign Office was informed of the concentration of fast forces (panzer divisions and brigades, motorized and cavalry divisions) in the southwest in the area of the Kiev Special Military District, which had been reconnoitered since May 11, 1941, and which, the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht concluded, clearly indicated offensive intentions. This conclusion was also consistent with the developing Red Army buildup. The operational plans of 11 March and 15 May (at the earliest) 1941, since Stalin's directives of 05 October 1940, called for the main thrust to be directed into the lie of Germany (as far as Berlin, Vienna, or Danzig, depending on the situation) in the southwestern direction. For this purpose, mainly mechanized corps of the Red Army were concentrated in this direction.<sup>5</sup> the findings mentioned in the reports on the political preparation of a Red Army offensive into Germany Of course, the preparation of an offensive also required the political-ideological and moral preparation of the Red Army soldiers and officers, because the Red Army's deployment in the western border military districts could no longer be concealed. The motto, however, was rather vaguely "War with Germany will come." What kind of this war should be, remained unclear at first. It is natural that German intelligence, as evidenced by the following excerpts from the reports of the High Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Office (citations v. 180-182), was not unaware of developments. Report of 01 March 1941 Quote V.1 80 "In this connection reference is also made to the statements of Soviet Russian officers known to the Foreign Office about German-Russian tensions, which in their hateful nature encourage anti-German propaganda not only in the Russian Wehrmacht but also among the Russian people." Report of May 11, 1941 Quote V.181 "Furthermore, the High Command points out the repeated statements of Soviet officers who openly speak of an imminent offensive during planning exercises and troop exercises." Report of June 11, 1941 Quote V.182 "The threat to Germany arising from the buildup of the Soviet Russian Army corresponds to the anti-German spirit bred in it, which is in any case fomented and kept alive by a hostile propaganda. "... "All these facts, combined with the '--) nichtungswillgegen Deutschland' bred in the Russian Wehrmacht..." Since all available operational plans of the General Staff of the Red Army of 1940/1941 designated Germany as the main enemy and the Wehrmacht as the instrument to be destroyed, the development of such a will of vernichtungs in the Red Army is not at all surprising. While Stalin had already expressed the opinion before senior generals and officers of the Red Army at the meeting for the evaluation of the Russo-Finnish War on April 14-17, 1940, that only an attacking army was a modern army, at the reception of the graduates of the military academies in the Kremlin on May 05, 1941, he stipulated with regard to the change of agitation and propaganda: quote V.183 "We must rebuild our education our propaganda, agitation, our press in the spirit of attack. The Red Army is a modern army, but a modern army is an attacking army." Consequently, Scherbakov, head of the Central Administration for Propaganda and Agitation in the CC of the CP(B), issued a directive on the turnaround in military political propaganda and agitation, which states, quote V. 1 84 "These new conditions in which the country lives demand of the party organizations a radical turn in party-political work for the Bolshevik education of the personnel of the Red Army and of the whole Soviet people in the spirit of ardent patriotism, revolutionary determination, and constant readiness to proceed to a crushing attack on the enemy. ... Party organizations are obliged to educate the Red Army and the entire Soviet people in the warlike spirit of aggression through their propagandistic and agitational work..."<sup>288</sup> With this directive from Scherbakov, the "cat was let out of the bag."<sup>6</sup> The Conclusions Drawn in the July 20, 1941 Report of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Office The repetition of these conclusions

already presented in the above-mentioned document of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Office (Quote V.185) seems significant, for they require some further consideration. Quote V.185 "In conclusion, the High Command of the Wehrmacht must state that such a military situation vis-à-vis a state with which a friendship pact exists must be described as unique. There can be no doubt that for months Soviet Russia has regarded this pact only as a kind of safeguard, in order to carry out as undisturbed as possible, in the interests of England, the most formidable military buildup in its history against Germany. The security of the Reich makes it imperative to eliminate this threat without delay. On the one hand,

these conclusions drawn by the High Command of the Wehrmacht give the impression that these documents could indeed have been prepared retrospectively in the interest of legitimizing the attack on the Soviet Union by presenting this extreme and worsening threat situation to the public. For, as is well known and already documented by the document of the Army High Command of 10 June, 22 June 1941, 3:30 a.m., was envisaged as the B-day and 18 June was determined as the latest time for stopping, without any unmasking of the center of gravity of the attack. For a halt after 18 June 1941, the cue "Altona" was ordered, with the full unmasking of the deployment to be accepted. Despite this possibility of stopping the attack even after June 18, 1941, one can probably justifiably assume that at the time of the report of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht to the Reich Government (June 20, 1941) "all masses had already been sung." On the other hand, however, thousands of Russian documents prove that the Red Army was indeed in the final stages of the most formidable deployment in the history of the Soviet Union to carry out an offensive that was to be opened after concentration and deployment of the shock groupings in about the I decade of July 1941, and thus the truth of this conclusion mentioned above in quotation V.185. That this deployment and the planned offensive of the Red Army was directed against Germany, which was designated in all operational plans as the main enemy, no one today can deny with a clear conscience. Stalin is said to have once angrily remarked, "Against whom else, Switzerland?". As further evidence of an imminent attack of the Red Army 289 and thus of the truth of the above conclusions can be cited: 11 June 1941 Instruction of the General Staff of the Red Army to advance the formations of the first operational squadrons of the border military districts as well as the air squadrons from the depths to airfields near the border until 25 Jun: 1941; 12 June 1941 Redeployment of the approaching 16th Army from Femost with more than 10,000 troops. Army from Femost with more than 1400 tanks under the command of the Kiev Special Military District as the main thrust force in the southwestern direction; 13 June 1941 advance transfer of a total of 29 rifle divisions of the rifle corps directly subordinated to the border military districts closer to the state border to new camps; 14/18 June 1941 instruction to move to the front-line command posts of the border military districts, etc. On June 22, 1941, the Red Army had concentrated 216.5 divisions, 12,379 tanks, and 8,240 aircraft in the frontier military districts. A preliminary order to the Red Army indicating the impending attack had been issued on June 11, 1941, and the naval fleet had at the same

was transferred to full combat readiness at the same time. Let us therefore note: This information from the High Command of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Office did not serve to create a possible pretext for an attack on the Soviet Union, but merely to publicize the reasons, long known to the political and military leadership of the German Reich, for this pre-emptive strike by the Wehrmacht 21 June 1941 Hitler's letter to Mussolini On 21 June 1941 Hitler wrote a letter to Mussolini to inform him of his intention to launch an attack on the Soviet Union and to justify it. Quote V.186 "Duce! I am writing you this letter at a moment when months of anxious deliberations as well as an eternal nerve-straining wait are coming to an end in the hardest decision of my life. I believe that after the presentation of the latest Russian situation map, as well as in consideration of numerous other reports, I can no longer justify prolonged watching, and I believe above all that there is no longer any way to eliminate this

danger, ... The deployment of the Russian forces I have had the last situation map presented by General Jodi to your Attaché here, to General Maras is tremendous. In fact, all available Russian forces are on our borders. Since the onset of the warm season, work has also been underway on numerous safeguards. If circumstances were to induce me to use the German air force against England, there is a danger that Russia would then begin blackmail operations in the south and in the north, to which I would have to yield silently simply because of my feeling of air inferiority. It is conceivable that Russia will try to destroy the Romanian oil area. We have built up defenses which, at least I believe, will prevent the worst. For the rest, it is the task of our army to eliminate this threat as soon as possible. 290 The memoirs of many contemporary witnesses explain how difficult Hitler's decision to launch a preemptive strike against the Soviet Union is said to have been. The remark "... months of anxious deliberations as well as an eternal nerve-straining wait in the hardest decision of my life..." does not sound at all like a long-planned crusade to the East. This statement of Hitler "The deployment of the Russian forces -...is tremendous. Actually all available Russian forces are at our borders,, cannot be contradicted. It is confirmed by the reports of the Foreign Air Forces East on the concentration of air forces of 10 June (Document V.148), the situation maps of 11 June (Document V.150) and 23 June 1941 (Document V.188), and by many other documents. Also the threat of the Romanian oil area is not a Hitler's thought construction, but proved by the reconnaissance results (document V.144) and the instructions of the High Command of the German troops in Romania resulting on this basis. Last but not least, the Red Army documents accessible today prove exactly these objectives. 21 June 1941 Hitler's Final Decision After the final development of the situation on the Russian side (Cf. above and Documents V.173-175.) and Halder's findings of 20 June 1941 that the Wehrmacht's deployment movements were proceeding according to plan in all sections (Document V.172 ), Hitler, who had still kept open the possibility of stopping the attack on the Soviet Union in the event of a possible change in the political situation with the "Altona" signal, now irrevocably ordered the execution of the preemptive strike with the "Dortmund" signal at 1:30 p.m. on 21 June 1941. The High Command of the Wehrmacht gave the decisive signal "Dortmund" to the army and tank groups during the night of 21-22 June 1941. 22 June 1941 Hitler's Appeal to the Soldiers of the Eastern Front In essence, Hitler's Appeal to the Soldiers of the Eastern Front of 22 June 1941 described the events in the East that had actually taken place and were supported by documents. Stalin's political and provocative measures challenging the German Reich, mentioned in the appeal, have already been considered, chronologically, in the individual chapters of this study. In the following, only the correctness of the Red Army's actions, as determined by German reconnaissance, will be assessed. The stationing of Russian troops in the Baltic Document V.187 (excerpts) BLIRTi i ir~"r X '. Soldiers of the Eastern Front! But while Germany in the spring of 1940 withdrew its forces far from the eastern frontier in accordance with the so-called friendship pact, indeed, denuded these areas of German troops for the most part altogether, the buildup of Russian forces already began at this time on a scale which could only be construed as a deliberate threat to Germany. . . . According to a statement made by Molotov at the time, 22 Russian divisions alone were already in the Baltic States in the spring of 1940. "Since the Russian government itself always claimed that it had been summoned by the population there, the purpose of its presence there could only be a demonstration against Germany. While you, my soldiers, from May 10, 1940, broke the Franco-British power in the West, the Russian march on our Eastern Front, however, continued on a gradually threatening scale. As early as August 1940, I believed that it was no longer in the interests of the Reich to leave our eastern provinces, which had already been devastated so many times, unprotected against this enormous buildup of Bolshevik divisions. With this, however, what the British-Soviet cooperation intended came to pass, namely the binding of such strong German forces in the East that, especially in terms of air power, a termination of the war in the West could no longer be dared by the German leadership. With 22

Russian divisions in the Baltic, Hitler named approximately that number of divisions which was also confirmed by Molotov. The Foreign Armies East had reported 24 divisions and 6 mot. mech. brigades in the Baltic States on July 24, 1940 (Document III.43). The draft operational plan of 19 August 1940, not confirmed by Stalin, provided for a substantial increase to 38.5 computational divisions, a number which, according to Watutin's calculations of 13 June 1941, was fixed at 22 divisions, since Stalin had already ordered the conduct of a defensive operation in the northwest direction on 05 October 1940. The danger of the 22 divisions mentioned by Hitler in the Baltic alone was that during the conduct of the Western campaign, the Wehrmacht had deployed only 7 land gun divisions with limited maneuver capabilities (no armored forces, no bomber air forces) to secure the eastern border, while Stalin's decision of 04 July 1940 and Tymoshenko's directives of 06 July 1940 placed 102 divisions (Table 111.46), including 14 armored divisions, and 95 air squadrons (Table III.48 ) in the border military districts of the Soviet Union. As the memorandum of conversation of July 24, 1940, indicates, 116 divisions had already been reconnoitered by Fremden Heere Ost in the border military districts, and a total inventory of 5,000 aircraft of the Red Army Air Forces had been established. A minimal increase in the security of the eastern frontier was achieved only by order of 29 June 1940, with the transfer of the 18th Army (15 divisions, no armored divisions) (Document III.27) to East Prussia and the General Government. A comparison of the Wehrmacht's small forces in the east (18th Army) in the time window (Sketch 111.53) illustrates the threatening scale of the Red Army's buildup at the end of August 1940 mentioned in the appeal. The Coup d'état in Romania The result was an intensification of anti-German Soviet-Russian activity, but above all the beginning of the internal erosion of the new Romanian state. With the help of confused, immature minds of the local legion, an attempt was now made to stage a coup d'état, the aim of which was to overthrow the head of state Antonescu, to create chaos in the country and thus, by removing a legal force, to remove the precondition for the entry into force of the German guarantee promise. Immediately after the failure of this enterprise, a renewed reinforcement of Russian troop concentrations on the German eastern border took place. Tank units and paratroops were moved in ever-increasing numbers to a threatening proximity to the German border. But you, my soldiers, know yourselves that until a few weeks ago there was not a single German armored or Mot. division on our eastern border. According to the reconnaissance data of the Estonian General Staff of 01 August 1940 (Document II 1.44), 30 divisions, 10 armored brigades and 1,200 aircraft of the Red Army were concentrated in the Kiev-Odessa-Bessarabia area. Kinzel stated in this regard that these figures roughly corresponded to German reconnaissance results. Thus, these statements about the concentration of Red Army troops in this area in the call were confirmed by German and Estonian reconnaissance results. If, however, I have been forced by circumstances to remain silent again and again, the moment has now come when continuing to watch would not only be a sin of omission, but a crime against the German people, and indeed against all of Europe. Today there are about 160 Russian divisions on our border. Keas Also this formulation "Today there are about 160 Russian Divisions at our border" can be confirmed as correct on the basis of the available documents. Thus, Army Group B on June 18, 1941 (Document V.l68) reported a strength of the Red Army in the expected opposing fronts of 160.5 calculation divisions, and also It. the information to the Foreign Office of June 11, 1941 -158 divisions in the border area (Document V.l76). Hitler's mention of 160 Russian divisions on the border, however, referred only to the divisions concentrated in the immediate vicinity of the border (i.e., I Strategic Squadron, but without Leningrad Military District), but not to the total number of divisions already deploying in the depths of the border military districts, and were thus a significant understatement of the reconnaissance results of the Foreign Armies East. Since this figure of 160 divisions also corresponds to the figure calculated by Vatutin on June 13, 1941, of 164 divisions of the I Strategic Squadron already in the vicinity of the border (likewise excluding the

Leningrad Military District), it can be considered proven. Of course, in view of the progressing but not yet completed deployment of the Red Army, the number of formations was even higher. Taking into account the still ongoing deployment of the II Strategic Squadron (the deployment of the III Squadron ( 24th and 28th Armies) had not yet been ordered) and evaluating Watutin's report of June 13, 1941, at the beginning of the war on June 22, 1941, there were about 216, 5 calculation divisions of the Red Army massed in the border military districts. Thus, the last prewar report of the Foreign Armies East in Situation Report No. 5 (Document V.156) of 13 June 1941, according to which 201, 5 calculation divisions were already in the border military districts of the Soviet Union, can also be evaluated as approximately correct. 292 G renzverletzungen For weeks, continuous violations of this border have been taking place, not only in our country, but also in the far north and in Romania. Russian airmen take pleasure in blithely overlooking the border, probably to prove to us that they already feel themselves masters of these territories. During the night of June 17-18, Russian patrols penetrated German territory for the first time and could be driven back only after a prolonged firefight. Many reports from the Horchdienst, the Abwehr, and in summarized form in the report to the Foreign Office (Document V.176) also confirm this statement. Summary The reasons given in the appeal for the attack on the Soviet Union confirm its preventive character. All the arguments mentioned above were factually correct and gave a sufficiently accurate description of the threat situation growing in the East. A will to wage a race-ideological war of extermination or a war for living space in the East is not recognizable in Hitler's appeal to the soldiers of the Eastern Front of June 22, 1941. 22 June 1941 Delivery of a Memorandum/Declaration of War from the Reich Government to the Government of the Soviet Union On 22 June 1941, early in the morning, the German Ambassador to the Soviet Union, von der Schulenburg, delivered a declaration in the Kremlin to the Soviet Union's Foreign Commissar, Molotov, and at the same time the Reich Minister of Foreign Affairs, von Ribbentrop, delivered a declaration to the USSR Ambassador to Germany, Dekanosov, concerning Germany's initiation of war against the Soviet Union. 23 June 1941 Situation Map East after the Beginning of Hostilities On this situation map of the Army High Command, the results of the 1st day of the war, the incursions achieved by the Wehrmacht, and the enemy situation are clearly visible. For our considerations, the currently recognized situation and the reconnoitered strength of the Red Army are of particular interest. The information about the enemy, which certainly dates back to June 21/22, updated by reconnaissance results of June 23, 1941, possibly also already by prisoner surveys, shows the last reconnaissance status reached with the beginning of the German-Russian war. This is recorded here once again in tabular form (since it is hardly legible above). The reconnoitered massing of 211.5 212 calculation divisions of the Red Army units available in the European part/in the border military districts at the beginning of the war is extraordinarily real and agrees approximately with the data of about 216 units according to the Russian documents. Although the number of 10 armored divisions of the Red Army remained far below the actual number available, it was still assumed that all of them were concentrated in the European part of the Soviet Union on the demarcation line. Also on June 23, 1941, the southwestern front could be determined as the strongest front with 79.5 computational divisions and thus the southwestern direction as the planned main direction of the Red Army, confirming previous reconnaissance results. The thrust forces of the 16th Army (5th Mechanized Corps and 57th Armored Division with more than 1,400 tanks as well as 32nd Rifle Corps) from the Far East concentrating in the Shepetovka-Berdichev-Proskurov area since June 15, 1941 (start of unloading June 18/19, 1941) were obviously recognized as a strong "mot.mech. group", but the units shown were wrongly assigned. V.6. summary of reconnaissance results; reconnaissance period March to June 1941 According to the documents, the transformation of the Wehrmacht's reconnaissance in the eastern direction from routine reconnaissance, which was customary vis-à-vis all littoral states, to concentrated enemy reconnaissance

began gradually in the months of February/March 1941. Evidence is the transition of the Fremden Heere Ost to the preparation of situation reports (First Situation Report No. 1, Document V.7.) from March 15, 1941, the transition from occasional reports by the commander of the listening troops to daily reporting from March 20, 1941, the start of organized aerial reconnaissance, the procurement of information on the prospective theater of war and provision of corresponding planning documents on the land fortifications of the USSR (Document V.12), on infrastructure (roads and bridges) (Document V.13), on the river landscape in the western Russian border area (Document V.15), and on the military economy of the Soviet Union (Document V.16) in March 1941. The increasing quality and depth of the reconnaissance reports testify to a substantial improvement in the organization of enemy reconnaissance activities. According to the reconnaissance reports of the Foreign Armies East, the Foreign Air Forces East, the commander of the listening troops and the commander of the fog troops, troop reconnaissance, and other sources, an extremely increasing Red Army buildup and a resulting further increase in the danger situation were noted in the east during the months of March to June 1941. These underline the in-depth and repeatedly confirmed reconnaissance results, which are summarized below. The reconnaissance of the Red Army's land forces 1. The reconnaissance of the development of the Red Army's total strength While as late as July 24, 1940, a total Red Army strength of 198 computational divisions (Document III.43), even as late as February 13, 1941, of 200.5 divisions was ascertained, the reconnaissance of 231.5 divisions at the end of April 1941 proves that the Wehrmacht had recognized the beginning of the Red Army's war preparation period, evidenced by the ascertained increase of 31 divisions (February 13 to April 28, 1941) (Table V.190). On April 30, 1941, Fremden Heere Ost reported 232 divisions (including 192 rifle, 36 cavalry, and 4 armored divisions, but excluding mot. mech. brigades)

(Document V.101) in a total lineup even with division numbers. And on June 18, 1941, 237 divisions were reported, and on June 23, 1941, i.e. after the beginning of the war, even 247 divisions. Although the beginning of the enormous enlargement of the Red Army was cleared up, Kinzel reported in the situation report No. 4 (document V.19) "New formations of units are not to be seen either in the European or in the Asiatic part." With this, Fremden Heere Ost contradicts itself, for in Situation Report No. 3 (Document V.77) the detection of new formations had already been reported. This report of allegedly undetected "new formations of units" should have raised the question in the Army High Command as to how the detected increase in size could be explained. Of course, this report of the Foreign Armies East that new formations had not been detected was also used by the established historiography to spread the fairy tale of an unprepared Soviet Union. Today it is known that after the rejection of the operational plan of September 18, 1940 by Stalin in implementation of his instructions of October 5, 1940 and with the adoption of the mobilization plan 41 of February 12, 1941, the Red Army entered the immediate war preparation period and increased the number of divisions to 314 (on April 23, 1941 reduced to 303 divisions). Implementation of this plan was begun immediately, and redeployment, reorganization, and replenishment were carried out primarily in the western frontier military districts. A precise overview of the total strength of the Red Army created by June 1941 is given by Vatutin in his information of June 13, 1941 (Table V.191). We can thus conclude that the Wehrmacht was able to detect the beginning of a rigorous increase in the size of the Red Army and to infer the start of immediate offensive preparations. However, as these figures show, such a tremendous increase in the total strength of the Red Army to 303 divisions and 25 brigades was not expected. However, this finding

to be viewed differently in the branches of arms. Rifle Divisions The reported number of 192 rifle divisions already known with numbers (Document V. 101) in the Red Army's inventory, which had to appear extraordinarily credible on the basis of reconnaissance even of unit numbers (of 109 divisions), is

an excellent reconnaissance result compared with the real existence of 198 rifle divisions in June 1941 (Table V.191). The extraordinary complication for the reconnaissance of the rifle divisions consisted in distinguishing between those already existing rifle divisions which were merely replenished and reconnoitered during the deployment, and those newly established in this prewar period in execution of Mobilization Plan 41 of 12 February 1941. The reason for this was the covered mobilization system of the Red Army rifle troops created by decision of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR on July 6, 1940, which provided for cadre divisions with a basic status of 3,000, 6,000, and 12,000 soldiers, respectively, i.e., divisions that already existed with a cadre base that only needed to be filled up with personnel.<sup>296</sup> Exactly reconnoitered and established with their locations were 179 rifle divisions by June 23, 1941 (Document V.188, Table V.190). The short-term reorganization of 5 airborne corps, 3 brigades each in the inventory, and the 10 antitank artillery brigades, for which a number of rifle divisions were reorganized at short notice, decided by the CC of the CP(B) on 23 April 1941, could well have been reconnoitered as well (cf. decrease by 5 Red Army rifle divisions in the report of 08 June 1941 (Document V.146)) as well as reports of newly reconnoitered airborne brigades, although it is doubtful that these processes, known to us today, were so evaluated by the Wehrmacht. Armored/Mechanized Troops Even in all of the Wehrmacht's early reconnaissance documents, the Red Army's inventory of tanks was reported to be enormous. The existence/formation of six combat-strong mechanized corps, out of the eight mechanized corps ordered by Stalin personally after the successes of the Wehrmacht's armored forces in the Western campaign, was already stated in the discussion note of the Foreign Armies East for Halder of 24 July 1940 (Document III.43). The information in the Handbook on the USSR's War Powers of 15 January 1941 (as of 01 January 1941) (Document IV.25) and likewise in further reconnaissance reports, for example on 13 February 1941 (Document IV.94) and for Army Group B of 8 June 1941 (Document V.146), also testify to the permanent observation of the six Mechanized Corps. However, the Mechanized Corps were assumed to have 2 tank and 1 motorized machine gun rifle brigade (Document IV.25) in their inventory. However, their real structure, consisting of 2 armored and 1 motorized rifle division, could be clarified before the beginning of the war, according to a report from Kinzel to Halder (citation V.54), based on information from Finnish reconnaissance on the armored corps in Pskov or by a reconnaissance report from the Wagener fortress staff dated May 31, 1941 (document V.126). It was also suggested early on that the mot. mech. brigades might be combined into mot. mech. divisions (Document IV.25). Until the beginning of the war, however, German reconnaissance had not realized that under the mobilization plan of 12 February 1941 the total strength of Mechanized Corps was increased from 9 to 30 (with 60 armored divisions) and that to support the rifle troops each rifle corps was equipped with a mot. mech. brigade, which, however, could no longer be completely replenished with tanks, since replenishment of the armored divisions of the Mechanized Corps was considered a priority. Although German reconnaissance initially assumed that the Red Army's armored forces were to be used primarily in direct support of the rifle troops and for occasional counterattacks or defense against German breakthroughs (Document V.9), however, it was noted as early as the Manual on the Red Army that they could also be used in large mechanized formations to solve operational tasks (Document IV.25). Halder shared this finding, as he recorded in the war diary on 04 June 1941. Even in one of the last briefings before the start of the war, the Enemy Assessment of the Foreign Armies East for Army Group B of 08 June 1941 (Document V.146), it was stated that since March 1941 there had been an attempt to combine the armored forces along German lines. The published presumed structure of a Russian armored corps was to serve as a guide. According to the Russian documents, Army General Pavlov's lecture at the training of senior cadres in December 1940, and exercises conducted (Documents V.102–104), the Mechanized Corps were intended for breakthrough through strong enemy defenses and subsequent thrust into the enemy's operational depth.

297 German reconnaissance had recognized this purpose of the Mechanized Corps for solving operational tasks, first rudimentarily and later more clearly. Thus, armored units, in some cases armored corps, were reported in the situation reports of the Foreign Armies East (U.a. Documents V.1 56.) as well as in many radio situation reports as the core of the recognized assault groupings or mobile groups. Nevertheless, it was assumed in the Army High Command that both the command capabilities of the Red Army's commander stock might not be sufficiently developed for operational thrusts and that the rear security would hardly meet these requirements. The repeated statement of about 10,000 tanks in the total Red Army inventory was underscored by Hitler's statement at the March 30, 1941, consultation with the generals that numerically the Russians were the strongest in the world, recorded in Halder's war diary. Also giant tanks with long 10 cm cannon (Riesenkolosse, 42-45 t) (citation V.49) were discussed, which allows the assumption that Hitler might have been informed about the new tanks T 34 and KW, although neither the information booklet about the armored fighting vehicles of the USSR of 01 June 1941 (document V.135) nor the situation reports of the Foreign Armies East (situation reports No. 1 to 5) reported about these new tank types. The reasons for the inadequate reconnaissance of the development of the Red Army's armored forces as shock forces by the Wehrmacht are obvious. Aware of the fact that knowledge about the new structuring of the armored forces in the form of mechanized corps revealed their purpose as offensive weapons, the Red Army did everything for their secrecy, including total shielding, very late start of deployment, marches in absolute radio silence and only at night in the form of wandering camps, camouflage of advance deployments as exercises, disguising of tanks on railroad transports in wooden boxes (e.g., during transports from Femost), and so on. In the documents of the eavesdropping service there is rather little to read about the advance of the high number of Mechanized Corps. Despite the reconnaissance of a number of divisions belonging to the Mechanized Corps, such as the 131st Motorized Rifle Division of the 9th Mechanized Corps (Document V.3), only a few Mechanized Corps command networks were reconnoitered. Cavalry In all Wehrmacht reconnaissance reports, about 32 to 33.5, and sometimes 37, cavalry divisions were reported in the Red Army inventory, although the number of cavalry divisions had been systematically reduced since 1940 in the course of the motorization and mechanization of the Red Army. According to the operational plan of May 15, 1941 (at the earliest) and also according to Watutin's calculations of June 13, 1941 there were only 13 cavalry divisions left in the Red Army in the summer of 1941, of which only 6 were deployed on the western theater of war and 7 on other secondary sections of the state border at the beginning of the war. 298 2. The continuation of the Red Army's massing in the frontier military districts was recognized A high massing of Red Army divisions in the frontier military districts, especially their concentration in the bridgeheads of Bialystok and Lviv, which were exceptionally favorable for the opening of offensive operations, made the imminent transition of the Red Army to the offensive appear certain. This statement is unequivocal, as evidenced by the following summary chart V.192 of the reconnaissance reports on the Red Army divisions concentrated in the border military districts of the USSR of January/February 1941 and the situation reports Nos. 3 and 5 of the Foreign Armies East and the situation map of 23 June 1941. According to the Russian documents, in February 1941 the Red Army had 148 divisions massed in the border military districts, some of them directly near the border, by the end of April already 170 divisions, and on June 22, 1941 216.5 divisions. After all, the numbers of divisions reconnoitered are approaching and, since all other characteristics also led to such a conclusion, their increasing tendency proves: the Red Army was made ready for an imminent war with Germany. Thus, while only about 34 divisions of the Wehrmacht were stationed in the east by February 1941, and the deployment based on the deployment order Barbarossa of 31 January 1941 did not begin until February 1941, the Fremden Heere Ost had already established 140-145 divisions of the Red Army in the border military districts of the USSR at that time, i.e., before the start of the Wehrmacht

deployment in the east. According to the situation reports and eavesdropping

According to the situation reports and eavesdropping messages, the reconnaissance had established many facts that, beyond the reconnaissance of the massing of divisions in the border military districts, confirmed the Red Army's march and which, when correctly evaluated in the high commands of the Wehrmacht and the Army, clearly pointed to their offensive preparations. Thus, Situation Reports Nos. 1 to 5 of the Foreign Armies East and the reports of the Hearing Troops East informed, among other things, about: □ marches from the Moscow Military District toward Minsk-Smolensk and the Baltic (Document V.7), the approach of divisions and motorized mechanized brigades (Document V.77), and the strengthening of forces in the Bialystok area (Document V.19); O the ongoing night transports of infantry and tanks (Document V.31). heavy transports of materiel to the Baltic, as well as 250 ascertained transport trains of guns, trucks, and ammunition to the west and southwest (Document V.19), constant transports of materiel via Lviv to the Rawa Ruska area, Sambor, and northern Bukovina, as well as to the Bialystok area (Document V. 119); O the new appearance of general commands, divisions, and motorized and mechanized brigades in the northeast, east, and southeast (Document V.31), including formations of unknown origin in the area of Bialystok and Pinsk, which, according to their clothing and equipment, were addressed as new formations (Document V.77); O the uninterrupted increase of forces on all fronts, for example, through the forward deployment of the III Panzer Corps and the II Army Corps (Document V.19); O the constant closing in on the German border (Document V.7 as well as nearly all eavesdropping reports.). O evidence of the increasing continuation of the buildup of Red Army formations, such as, among other things, the reports from the listening troops of newly appearing radio networks and radio stations moving in the direction of the west (Document V.26 and others). 3. the OKW/OKH became aware of the conduct of a partial mobilization and the establishment of the war structures of the Red Army The situation reports No. 1 to 5 of the Foreign Armies East in connection with the reports of the listening troops reported: O the conduct of a covered partial mobilization and the early call-up of four year groups with the aim of replenishing the units to full wartime strength (Document V.7); O the determination of new formations of units (Document V.77); O the early call-up of autumn recruit year groups with special orders as early as the spring of 1941 and partial call-ups of specialists and supplements primarily in the western military districts and in the major cities of Moscow and Leningrad (Document V.77) as well as the conscription of deferred cohorts 19131921 (Document V.19); O the withdrawal of crews of Ukrainian nationality who were not considered reliable in a war against Germany (Document V.19); O the identified conscription of 500,000 men for camouflage reasons in the form of individual call-ups to produce near-war replenishments of rifle units to circumvent a total mobilization that could be easily detected by the public (Documents V.19,156). Indeed, the implementation of a total mobilization of the Red Army was not established (Documents V.77,119.), since it was to be proclaimed only after the beginning of the war. O the establishment of the Red Army formations in the war division (Document V.13,163.); O warnings of the commander of the fog troops about the fully established structures of the Red Army chemical troops and their preparation for a gas warfare (All documents, especially V. 140.); O Strikingly heavy radio traffic after June 11, 1941, as well as the movement of radio networks and radio stations toward the border, especially toward the frontal salient of Bialystok and Lviv (Documents Eavesdropping Troops after June 11). Not all the enlightened facts were evaluated correctly. For example, it was concluded that the early conscription of the fall recruit cohort as early as the spring of 1941 may have served, in whole or in part, to use manpower for the construction of fortifications, or that the scheduled conscription of reservists was for the conduct of summer training (Document V.19).

4 The Reconnaissance of the Asymmetrical Strategy Planned by the Red Army for Its Offensive Although, according to present knowledge and the documents evaluated, the Wehrmacht had no

information about the operational plans of the Red Army General Staff, signals about the Red Army's operational intentions in the form of the planned asymmetrical strategy had, however, become unmistakable. According to a meeting note with Chief L of April 30, 1941 (Document V.105), the balance of forces between the enemy and the Russians was estimated as follows: Quote

V.193 ...Northern section: German and Russian forces about equal. Central section: strong German superiority. Section south: Russian superiority. "There is hardly anything to add to this. German reconnaissance knew where the Red Army was concentrating its offensive forces. Constantly reported other signals from reconnaissance about the Red Army's operational planning from many sources included: - the assembly of strong motorized and armored units in the immediate vicinity of the border in the frontal salient of Bialystok (Document V.150) and Lviv (Documents V.126,127), which allowed a rapid transition to offensive action, as well as the strong and further increasing concentration of air forces in the southwestern direction (Document V.111); - current reports, such as in the enemy situation report of Army Group C (North) of 05 May 1941 (Document V.109), that a substantial strengthening of forces in this direction was not to be assumed, while at the same time increased construction activity on the fortifications and defenses was noted; - the finding of a strong concentration of Red Army units in the Lemberg frontal salient in the radio situation map of May 11, 1941, of Horchtruppen Ost (Document V.113); - the detailed information on the defenses in the northwestern direction in Enemy Message Sheet No. 4 of Fortress Staff Wegener of May 31, 1941 (Document V.126); - the repeatedly recognized concentration of Red Army formations in the main southwestern direction, such as the finding of 59.5 computational divisions in the "Kiev Front" in the supplements to the enemy situation of Army Group B of June 18, 1941 (Document V.168). The attentive reader will not have missed other findings in the documents. 5. reconnaissance of the preparation of offensive actions of the Red Army Serious indications of the preparation of offensive actions in selected directions could be taken from a whole series of information. Some selected examples shall be mentioned: O the concentration of forces in the direction of or in the spaces of Bialystok and Lviv (documents V.7,26,27, 31, 77, 119,156, etc.), which were hardly suitable for a successful defense, but excellent for the opening of an offensive. And so the Red Army's operational plans of March 11 and May 15, 1941, provided. O the identification of mobile groups (Document V.77), including a strong mobile force group in Bessarabia and northern Bukovina, as well as several newly emerged strong mobile groups around Chernivtsi immediately on the border, combined with further closing to the border, which, the Stranger Armies East concluded, might be destined for offensive tasks (Document V.156); without a doubt, this meant the emergence of the mechanized corps formed since 1940 (in the inventory two armored divisions and one motorized rifle division each) of the I Strategic Squadron (of the border military districts), which were pulled forward in the form of migrating camps from about mid-May 1941. Therefore, these observations were made only in Situation Report No. 5 of 13 June 1941, although the existence of 6 Mechanized Corps had already been noted in the conversation note for Halder of 24 July 1940 (Document IIL43), in the Handbook on the USSR War Forces of 15 January 1941 (as of Ol.January 1941), and in many other reports. O the increase in radio activity in

the baikons, such as in the Chernivtsi-Kamenets-Podolsk-Proskurov-Lviv-Stanislavov area (Document V.119); O the appearance of a grouping of mountain rifle divisions (suspected to be a mountain rifle corps, some of them coming from the Caucasus) southeastward of Kolomyya, which gave indications of the planned conduct of combat operations under mountain/medium mountain conditions (Document V. 156); O the appearance in the situation reports of so-called reserve groups, such as a reserve group around Rovno, an operational reserve group in the Shepetovka area, a new weak reserve group south of Minsk, and one north of Telsiai, and the confusion of I PzK. (meaning the 1st Mechanized Corps in the Pskov area) with an operational reserve group (Document V.156). Although these were erroneously

called reserve groups in Situation Report No. 5, however, they clearly prove the ongoing Red Army buildup reconnoitered by Fremden Heere Ost and its advance to the border. On the detection of increased construction activity in the Baltic and on the Dniester and Prut rivers (Documents V.12, 119.); After evaluating the Red Army's operational plans, we now know that the expansion of defenses in the Baltic Special Military District and in the Kiev Special Military District in the southern direction corresponded exactly to the operational plans, which provided for a temporary defensive in these directions. On the enlightened dangerous concentration

of enormous Red Army forces in offensive formation of the Western Special Military District (the later Western Front) in the frontal salient of Bialystok in the situation map of the Army High Command of June 11, 1941 (Document V.150); □ the evidence of the recognized danger of a Russian attack on the southern flank (border with Romania) and its preparation for defense in the event of an attack |

Documents V.144,148.) by the Red Army. The highest danger to Ploesti and thus to a reliable oil supply vital to the war effort of the Wehrmacht became apparent. 6. the OKW expected the approach of Far East units of the Red Army After Halder's notice without comment, given on 14 April 1941, of the conclusion of Russia's treaty with Japan of 13 April 1941, evidenced by his remark "Nonaggression pact Russia-Japan.... ", and the globally circulated report in the Japanese newspaper "Domei Zusin" about the beginning of the transfer of Far East units to the West, which could by no means have escaped German reconnaissance, there was little illusion in the Army High Command about the imminent transfer of Far East troops to the Western border military districts, as evidenced by the following message in Situation Report No. 4 of 15 May 1941. "News that several divisions have recently been reported to have been transferred from the Femen East to the West has not yet been confirmed. At most, in the foreseeable future, a transfer of 1-2 cav. divisions, furthermore of special units, especially Pz. and artillery, and special units on a limited scale to the European Western Front may be considered." (Document V.1 19). The magnitude of the formations, however, seems to have been underestimated. However, 1t. the radio situation report of the commander of the listening troops of 01 June 1941 (Document V.1 31), an area of Shepetovka-Tarnopol-Vinnitsa, obviously intended for the planned concentration of an army, was recognized. A whole series of reports show that the listening service became aware of the approach of the formations from the Far East. Thus, on June 20, 1941, the 46th Rifle Division (It was the 46th Rifle Division of the 32nd Rifle Corps (16th Army) reported, although the location of Simferopol for this division was misstated.), an unknown rifle corps approaching Stanislau, and on June 21, 1941, the mention of the 32nd Rifle Corps in a radio message were detected. The enormous potential of tanks to be expected from Femost became known to the High Commands of the Wehrmacht and the Army at the latest with the report of the military attaché in Tokyo (1,000 tanks) of 02 January 1941 (Documents IV26,27, Tables IV28,29.). From the accessible Russian documents we know today that in exactly the above-mentioned area the 16th Army from the Far East was concentrated and subordinated to the Commander-in-Chief of the Kiev Special Military District, which was planned to be the main thrust of the southwestern front with more than 1,400 tanks. Since the deployment of the units from the Far East, for the preparation of which the preliminary orders were issued on April 26, 1941, and the western transport initially reached the Siberian Military District, the statement in Situation Report No. 5 of the Foreign Armies East of June 13, 1941, "Far East as before" (Document V.1 56), is a false report.

However, an arrival of these troops in the western frontier military districts could not be cleared up as of June 13, 1941, since the westward march from the Siberian Military District was not resumed until May 25, 1941, and the unloading of Far East troops in the area south of Shepetovka began on June 15, 1941. According to the reports of the listening troops on 20 June 1941, the march of the divisions of the 16th Army forward had begun immediately after the unloading. 7. the high command of the Wehrmacht and the Wehrmacht divisions were aware of the all-round preparation of the theater of war In the

comprehensive and all-round preparations for a military confrontation on the planned western theater of war of the USSR, the population, industry and agriculture as well as the entire infrastructure were also included. As the following few examples prove, this was also cleared up by the Foreign Armies East, including: O the implementation of mock air alerts and blackout exercises in large cities (document v.7); O the clearing of a zone at least 800 m (in some cases 10 km) wide along the entire border of civilians (document v.77); However, the question arises why the clearing was done only with a depth of 800 m to a maximum of 10 km? Obviously, this is another indication that an attack by the Germans, which would have immediately reached a depth of several 100 km (e.g.: by bombardment), was not expected and the Red Army was made available for its own offensive actions. O the preparation of the entrainment of cattle and the destruction of grain supplies (document V.1 19) as well as the withdrawal of supplies, demolition of bridges or their preparation for blowing up (document V.1 56); O the evacuation of officers' families from the areas near the border (documents V.7,156) and the recall of diplomats' families. 8. The high commands were aware of the ideological preparation, oriented towards a military confrontation with Germany This finds its expression in such formulations in the situation reports as: O the observation of the growth of a war psychosis in the public mood (Document V.7) and the instruction of Riga troop units (Document V.31); O enlightened statements by commissars in troop units that war with Germany would occur (Document V.31); O the preparation of troops at lessons and lectures for the possibility of war with Germany (Document V.156). 9. noting the strengthening of border protection and a high number of border violations Thus, it was noted many times: O the strengthening and tightening of border guards (Document V.1 19); The deployment of Red Army formations required reliable security and cover, for which orders were issued by Zhukov, as can be seen from the operational plan of May 15, 1941, under item VI, even before the operational plan was submitted to Stalin. Z) a high number of border violations by soldiers, some even by officers, and by Red Army aircraft (documents V.70,119,176). Summary of Reconnaissance Results on the Red Army Air Forces The reconnaissance results on the Red Army air forces available in this last pre-war period March to June 1941 can be assessed, compared with the data of Russian documents, as follows: 1. Reconnaissance of Aircraft Strengths of the Red Army Air Forces According to rough estimates, German reconnaissance since 09 September 1940 (Document III.79) always assumed about 12,000 to 14,000 aircraft in the inventory of the USSR air forces. According to the information in the orientation booklet issued by the Foreign Air Forces East (Document IV.83), as of 01 February 1941, the total strength of the air forces of the Red Army was reported to be 10,500 aircraft, 7,500 of which were in the European part of the USSR. As of June 10, 1941 (document v.148), the locations of 3,635 aircraft could be determined by the listening troops of the Wehrmacht, and 2,520 aircraft by picture reconnaissance. In real terms, based on a monthly output of the aircraft industry of the USSR of 256 aircraft/month, the total inventory on 01 June 1941 already amounted to 18,759 aircraft.<sup>301</sup> Of these, according to Russian information, 8,240 combat aircraft<sup>302</sup> (8,342 according to archive data<sup>303</sup>) were in the border military districts on 22 June 1941. 2. reconnaissance of the further consolidation of the grouping of air forces in the 5 frontier military districts/near the frontier In all, according to the operational plan of 15 May 1941 (at the earliest) and Watutin's information of 13 June 1941, the Red Army air forces had 218 combat-ready air squadrons on 22 June 1941. Of this total inventory of 218 air squadrons, 159 air squadrons were planned for operations in the west, while 59 squadrons were deployed in the wider regions of the USSR. While the Fremden Luftwaffen Ost 1t. the orientation booklet of the Luftwaffenfuehrung of 01 February 1941 (document V.83) had established 38 Fliegerdivisions, in the inventory 162 squadrons in the European part of the USSR, the following table V.194 and the chart V.195. proves, that the great majority of the air divisions and squadrons (29 air divisions and 141 squadrons), reconnoitered by

April 13, 1941, were concentrated in the border military districts (corresponding to 87%), i.e. far from the immediate vicinity of the border with East Prussia and the Generalgouvernement. A comparison of the air squadrons' reconnaissance is shown in the following chart V.195. It is this early buildup of the Red Army's air force grouping near the border, which began as early as 1940, that proves the offensive intentions of the Russian leadership. Considering that the last reconnaissance results known here date from April 13, 1941, the comparison of the reconnoitered air divisions and squadrons with the state of advance of the Red Army air forces reached on June 22, 1941, shows considerable accuracy. Graph V.195 proves that the essential growth of Red Army air forces in the frontier military districts was reconnoitered between January/February 1941 and April 1941. Also, the buildup of air forces had not yet been completed, since the planned grouping of air forces was apparently dependent only on the completion of

of the new airfields in the western border military districts. This problem is also indicated by the report on the provision of operational airfields for fast fighters by the NKVD on June 15, 1941 (Document V.1 62). The permanent advance of parts of the air divisions/squadrons to forward operating airfields, however, the constant appearance of new radio lines and entire radio networks was regularly intercepted and reported by the listening troops East, e.g., on May 11, 1941 (Document V.1 13). This ongoing densification of air forces near the border, which could not be overlooked, should also have come to the attention of the Luftwaffe evaluators through a comparison of the radio and image reconnaissance of the Foreign Air Forces East and the listening troops of 10 June 1941 (Document V.148) with the situation map of the listening troops, as of 01 January 1941 (Document IV.69). The development of bombing air forces, whose range of 1,500 km could enable bombing of Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Belgrade, and Sofia, respectively, was recognized as particularly dangerous. The abolition of decentralized subordination to military districts and consolidation of long-range bomber forces to perform strategic tasks in the depths of enemy territory was also reconnoitered. 3. reconnaissance of operational planning/the main direction of the Red Army's planned offensive In good time, but no later than March/April 1941, the Wehrmacht listening troops recognized the strong concentration of the Red Army's air forces in the southwestern direction. While 8 air divisions (Document V.67, Table V.69.) were detected in the Kiev Special Military District, reinforcements from adjacent military districts (Odessa Military District: 20th, 21st, and 45th Air Divisions; Kharkov Military District: 49th Air Division) very quickly increased the number of air divisions ■ to 12. On the basis of picture reconnaissance, Fremden Luftwaffen Ost recognized the following distribution of Red Army Air Forces aircraft by operational directions by 02 June 1941 (Document V.133): An operation of the aircraft of the Leningrad Military District could hardly be expected in the northwestern direction because of the expected entry of Finland into the war, while in the southwestern direction joint actions of the air forces of the Kiev Special (449 Flgz.) and the Odessa Military District (593 Flgz.) had to be expected. According to document V.167 on the results of image reconnaissance until 02 June 1941, the Wehrmacht had correctly recognized this. However, due to ordered restrictions, image reconnaissance could only reconnoiter to a depth of about 250 to 300 km, so that the situation at greater depths could only be reconnoitered by the listening troops. Also, the advance of the Red Army air forces from the depth of the country was to be carried out, of course, only shortly before the beginning of the offensive, which was planned about 1 decade of July 1941. The evidence is provided by the following Table V.197 on the planned initial position of the Red Army air squadrons for this offensive planned against Germany according to a statement by Watutin on 13 June 1941. The planned concentration of the air forces with 85 air squadrons in the main direction southwest becomes clear. The real strength of the Red Army air forces in the southwest direction reached 2577 aircraft as of 22 June 1941. 309 4.

Reconnaissance of Red Army Air Forces Airfields in the Frontier Military Districts The following Table

V.198 presents the number of airfields in the frontier military districts reconnoitered by Wehrmacht picture and radio reconnaissance, probably to a depth of about 300 km, but not the number of Red Army Air Forces airfields present in these military districts. In fact, there were 477 airfields, including 382 operational airfields, in all 5 newly configured frontier military districts after the occupation of western Belarus, western Ukraine, the Baltic states, and Bessarabia. By the I quarter of 1941, new construction of 135 airfields was planned and another 143 airfields were to be completed by mid-1941. Since only 100 airfields existed in the Kiev Special Military District, the new construction of 144 airfields was planned, again confirming the southwest direction as the direction of the main strike.<sup>310</sup> A close evaluation of the map of the Foreign Air Forces East of 10 June 1941 (Document V.148), it was apparent that the operational airfields in the Baltic Special Military District were located farther inland in comparison with the airfields in the Western and Kiev Special Military Districts and, together with many other features, could be recognized as an indication that the Red Army had intended to conduct a defensive operation in the northwest direction. Also, the reconnaissance of reports of the provision of airfields of the border troops (NKVD) in the immediate vicinity of the border for fast fighter aircraft (message Horchtruppen 11 May 1941.), possibly for squadrons and chains, testifies to the progressive consolidation of the Red Army air forces in the border military districts. Given the great depth of the border military districts (e.g. Kiev Special Military District about 750 km), taking into account the allowed depth of image reconnaissance of about 300 km, the reconnaissance of 177 airfields of the Red Army is an excellent result, especially since the mass of the newly created operational airfields close to the border were lawns difficult to detect, which in view of the possible I. decade July 1941 planned offensive, could not be used. These airfields were undoubtedly not yet occupied by aircraft in view of the Red Army offensive planned for the first decade of July 1941. Hence the lower reconnaissance figures of the listening troops of only 104 airfields occupied by aircraft. Timoshenko's order to decentralize aircraft and make them stealthy/invisible from the air was not issued until June 19, 1941.

311 5. Reconnaissance of the Number of Operational Aircraft and the Training Status of Crews In the Wehrmacht's reconnaissance documents, the condition of the air forces is described with such phrases as "no longer modern" \yzw. "pattern obsolete", although the Luftwaffe orientation booklet of 01 February 1941 already mentioned 2,000 aircraft consisting of modern types. In fact, 1,378 modern aircraft (17% Pe-2, IL-2, MiG-3, Lagg-3, Jak-1, 2 and 4, TB-4) were stationed in the border military districts in June 1941. However, in the 4 long-range bomber corps of bombing forces stationed in the border military districts, with an inventory of 1,333 aircraft, there were only 9 bombers of the new TB-4 type. Only 17 % of modern aircraft types sounds little. But if one considers that the air fleets of the Wehrmacht in the East had only about 2,253 aircraft in their total inventory, this 17% (equivalent to 1,378 aircraft) still represented a considerable potential of the Red Army air forces in comparison. However, the crews/airmen of the air forces stationed in the border military districts, did not have the combat experience of the German Air Force, nor did they have much of its level of aviation training, as the following Table V.199 demonstrates. Thus, the vast majority of the flying personnel (6,382 crews/flight commanders) of the air forces concentrated in the border military districts were trained only for daytime flying in easy weather conditions and only 24 for nighttime/difficult weather conditions. German reconnaissance had recognized this, as witnessed by the following formulation in the Luftwaffe Orientation Booklet of 01 February 1941 (Document IV.83): quote V200 "With good individual flying performance, the level of flying training in general is not equal to that in the German Air Force." <sup>313</sup> And also in the enemy assessment of the Fremden Heere Ost it says: "Night and bad weather flights are avoided if possible." Also, a high number of nonoperational aircraft were expected. While German reconnaissance assumed the high figure of about 40% (citation IV.11S), and the Orientation Booklet of the Commander-in-Chief of the Air Force <sup>314</sup> even assumed 50% of Red Army

aircraft not operational, we know today that according to Soviet data, of 8,342 aircraft in the border military districts, only 1,200 aircraft (equivalent to 14%) were not operational or undergoing maintenance in June 1941.<sup>5</sup> The Reconnaissance of a Peripheral Threat Not only the military threat from the east, as shown above, but also Stalin's reconnaissance activities on the northeastern and southeastern flanks of the German Reich prove with all clarity the approach of military action by the Red Army. Stalin's dangerous geostrategic policy in Scandinavia and the Balkans, which was directed against Germany and which, in view of the enlightened British and Russian incidents, led to the expectation of a double threat to the German Reich, should by no means be judged as a secondary cause for preventive measures by the Wehrmacht.

1. Scandinavia - The enlightenment of the aggravation of the situation in Finland was greatly aided by information from the Finnish reconnaissance organs, the German Attache Department, even directly by warnings from Field Marshal Mannerheim. It was also the Finnish Hearing Service which, on 13 June 1941, informed of the naval fleet commissar's directive to the Baltic Red Banner Fleet of 11 June 1941 to establish combat readiness.

D The Finnish-Russian conflict over the Petsamo xickel ore mines, which came to a head in February/March 1941, gave rise to fears of a Russian act of violence to seize Petsamo, which would also affect the German troops in northern Norway. How justified this fear was is proved by one of the tasks of the Operational Plan Finland of the General Staff of the Red Army of September 18, 1940, which states: "... 4. by active actions in the north in the first days of the war to deprive Finland of the port of Petsamo and to close the Norwegian border in the Petsamo-Nautsi section." The planning of the immediate deprivation of the Petsamo area and of the important base at Murmansk 1t. the meeting note Finland of 01 May 1941 (Document V.105) shows that these intentions were enlightened. O The reconnoitered British commando raid on the port of Svolvaer/Northern Norway of 04 March 1941 (Document V.33) also made clear the need for a significant strengthening of Norway's coastal defenses. The reconnaissance of further attempts by the British to disrupt iron ore shipments in northern Norway from Kiruna, Sweden, via Narvik, and thus to disrupt sea transports along the Norwegian coast to Germany, substantially increased the threat level. O These demands on Finland, which were becoming steadily more aggressive as a result of the British coup d'état and Stalin's, as well as the stationing of considerable parts of the Red Army on the border with Finland, gave rise to the suspicion of a Soviet Union alliance with Great Britain even before the beginning of Barbarossa, as evidenced by Halder's remark ([interplay] England-Russia)" of March 30, 1941 (quotation V.37). The announcement of another war against Finland, the so-called "Continuation War," by Molotov during his talks with Hitler in November 1940 revealed Stalin's thrust. - In view of this dangerously developing situation, the movements of the formations in the Arkhangelsk and Leningrad Military Districts were naturally the subject of military reconnaissance by the Wehrmacht (Documents V.60,77).

2 Balkans Although Hitler had the firm intention to keep the Balkans free of war, it too developed into a crisis region, later into a theater of war, both by the Soviet Union and by England. Russia O Due to the occupation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina at the end of July 1940, the Red Army air forces had moved to within about 120 km of Ploesti and could pose an immediate threat to the Ploesti oil region. O Through immediate reconnaissance of the unlawful occupation of the Danube islands by the Soviet Union on October 26, 1940, and the noted deployment of an armed Danube flotilla at Ismail, which could act up the Danube to Galatz and threaten German oil shipments, it became clear that Stalin would not be satisfied with occupying Bessarabia and northern Bukovina in the Balkans. O The concentration of 49 Russian divisions in the Kiev-Bessarabia area, reconnoitered in mid-December 1940 (Document IV21) by the Foreign Armies East, showed the military-political situation in the Balkans, which had become complicated, and the development of the highest danger for the Ploesti oil area. O Molotov's declaration of Bulgaria as a Russian sphere of influence, the overthrow of the Yugoslav government organized by

joint efforts of the American, British, and Russian intelligence services, and the creation of a regime in Yugoslavia inclined toward Russia further complicated the situation in the Balkans, threatened Germany's southeastern flank, and forced Hitler to occupy Yugoslavia as well when "Marita" was carried out. The danger of a multi-front war was approaching. On As early as March 17, 1941, according to his notes, Halder carried to Hitler that Russian strikes by sea or air (he called them "Russian preventive measures" in awareness of his own planned preemptive strike) against Romania should be expected. This formulation speaks of Halder's concern that the Red Army might forestall the Wehrmacht in view of its full-scale gigantic deployment. On The established very serious threat of the oil area of Ploesti by the Red Army is also evident in the directive of the High Command of the troops of the German Army in Romania of 03 June 1941 (Document V.152), which clearly proves the expectation of a Russian attack. These fears were confirmed by the reconnoitered enemy situation of 07 June 1941 (Document v.1 44, Table V.145.) on the Russian-Hungarian border, called the "Bessarabian Front". On On 09 June 1941, by the High Command of the troops of the German Army in Romania, after assessing the enemy situation, it had to be stated: "The massing of strong Russian forces on the Romanian border." and "The Russian deployment on the Romanian border is nearing completion." (Document V.155). England As evidenced by the mid-December map (Document IV21) of Foreign Armies East and many other documents, German reconnaissance in the Balkans, strongly supported by attache reports and the Abwehr under Admiral Canaris, was always up-to-date on military-political developments. - As early as October 24, 1940, it was noted that actions by British air forces from Crete could pose an air threat to the Romanian oil region. The landing of the first British units in the Athens area on November 04, 1940, and the report on November 30, 1940, of the transfer of long-range English aircraft to Greece confirmed the continued threat to Germany's southeastern flank. The increasing danger of a British air attack on the oil area was also taken into account by Wehrmacht Mission Order No. 2 of 12 February 1941 (Document IV.120). The following statement by Halder (Quote V201) at a situation briefing on 17 March 1941 confirmed the reconnaissance of the danger posed to Germany on the southeastern flank by the landing of the English invasion forces. Quote V2 01 "Greece: English troops 18,000-20,000 men (also air force)." 316 On Like the defensive report of 19 February 1941 (Document IV.110), which suggested cooperation between English and Russian intelligence services, the possibility of the Soviet Union joining forces with England, the main enemy, could no longer be ruled out. Reports of military cooperation between England and Turkey directed against Germany and the uncertainty of Stalin's behavior in this case, and especially Turkey's declaration that it wanted to continue cooperating with England, in no way contributed to easing the situation in the Balkans. Corresponding indications were provided by a telegraphic attache message of February 27, 1941 (Document IV.121) about British attempts to win Turkey for the fight against Germany. As the order of the Supreme Command of the Wehrmacht for the defense of the Romanian oil region of March 26, 1941 (Document V.40) shows, Russian and British attacks on the oil region, which was of vital importance for the Wehrmacht, had to be expected to a greater extent. The misjudgments of Kinzel in the reconnaissance reports - The alleged "defensive measures" of the Red Army recognized by Kinzel Although, as proved above by many enlightened facts in the situation reports and, today after knowledge of the Russian documents a thousand times, the Red Army was marching up to Germany for the execution of an offensive, these facts were not taken into account in the assessment of the reconnaissance results of the Foreign Armies East (citations V.202 ) by Kinzel, who was responsible for it, despite the generally correct and detailed descriptions of the march, incorrectly concluded, possibly even falsified. Here are some statements from the overall assessments by Kinzel. Quotes V202 15.03.1941: "Partial mobilization and closing of Russian troops to the border is defensive measure and serves only to strengthen border security" (Document V.7, Situation Report No. 1.). 28.04.1941:

"Reinforced and accelerated fortification works on the Dniester mark the defensive intention of the Russians. " (Document V.77, Situation Report No. 3.). "Reliable signs of offensive intentions are not discernible; as before, these are essentially defensive measures. " (Document V.77, Situation Report No. 3.". 15.05.1941: "Offensive intentions are not discernible." (Document V. 119, Situation Report No. 4.). 13.06.1941: "For the rest, as before, seen on the whole , defensive behavior is to CTWÄffcÄ.

"(Document V.1 56, Situation Report No. 5.). This multiple false evaluation of the obvious offensive preparations of the Red Army as defensive measures must be viewed in a differentiated manner. On the one hand, the task of the armies of the first strategic echelon of the Red Army, the so-called covering armies, at first actually consisted in safely covering the deployment of the second and third strategic echelons of the Red Army, the concentration of the main thrust forces in the direction of the southwest, the 16th Army from Femost, the advance of the mechanized corps, the transfer of the aviation forces to the forward positions before a possible surprise attack, i.e., to perform a purely defensive task until the beginning of the offensive of the Red Army. It is worth recalling the operational planning of the Wehrmacht to carry out the advance of the shock forces (12 tank and 12 motorized divisions of the Panzer Groups) by the 4b Squadron 22 days before the beginning of the attack,

the rebasing of the air forces of the first strike to the forward positions, and the capture of the attack starting positions by the forward divisions of the Army and Panzer Groups under cover 1 day before the beginning of the attack. The infantry divisions already lying in the east

of the first line of the Army Groups of the Wehrmacht had to fulfill the same securing task (Cf. List of Infantry Divisions in the Situation Maps of 16 and 19 July 1941, Documents V. 165 and 172.). With such nonsensical statements "The Russian is the soldier of defense." (Document V.98) or with the phrase "seen in the big picture" (Document V.156J, one cannot justify a will to alleged defensive actions of the Red Army. These conclusions of Kinzel represent an ignorance of the enlightened signals pointing to the imminent Russian offensive and thus a blatant distortion of the real danger. On the other hand, however, the reports of the Foreign Armies East and the Foreign Air Forces East, including the aerial reconnaissance, the listening troops, the commander of the fog troops, and the Finnish and Romanian reconnaissance, brought innumerable indications beyond these (They are explained above and will not be repeated here.), which, when assessed in detail by the general staffs of the Wehrmacht, pointed to the impending offensive of the Red Army. □ The denial of new formations by the Red Army. Among other things, Kinzel reported in Situation Report No. 4 of 15 May 1941: "New formations of units are not discernible either in the European or in the Asiatic part. " (Document V.1 19). How one can be mistaken! In implementation of Mobilization Plan 41, from February 1941 onward, in the course of the immediate war preparation period, the formation of a large number of divisions, including 21 Mechanized Corps, consisting of 42 armored and 21 motorized divisions, by means of new formations, reorganizations, and replenishments, took place primarily in the western border military districts. In addition, attention should have been attracted by the way in which the total inventory of 200 divisions (Document IV.49) ascertained in the reconnaissance information on the enemy situation of 15 January 1941 was cleared up on 28 April 1941 to a total inventory of 231.5 divisions (Document V.77) without new formations. An increase of 31 in the number of divisions ascertained without redeployments? Of course, these conclusions of Kinzel are thoroughly eviscerated by the established historiography without evaluating the totality of the Aulkärungsergebnisse of the Wehrmacht and its neighbors, although these could not be overlooked. Conclusions from Chapter V; Reconnaissance Period March to June 1941 1. Reconnaissance results in these last pre-war months March to June 1941; What became known to the German political and military leadership? According to the documents, the transformation of the Wehrmacht's reconnaissance in the eastern direction from routine reconnaissance, customary vis-à-vis all littoral states, to concentrated enemy reconnaissance began gradually in the months of

February/March 1941. Evidence includes the transition of the Fremden Heere Ost to the preparation of situation reports (Situation Report No. 1 of 15 March 1941, Document V.7 ), the transition from occasional reports by the commander of the listening troops to daily reporting beginning on March 20, 1941, the start of organized aerial reconnaissance, the acquisition of information on the likely theater of war and provision of appropriate planning documents on the USSR's land fortifications, infrastructure (roads and bridges), the riverine landscape in the western Russian border area, and the Soviet Union's military economy in March 1941. The increasing quality and depth of the reconnaissance reports testify to a substantial perfection of the organization of enemy intelligence activities. According to the reconnaissance reports of the Foreign Armies East, the Foreign Air Forces East, the commander of the listening troops and the commander of the fog troops, as well as other sources, an extremely increasing Red Army buildup and a resulting further increase in the danger situation were noted in the East during the months of March to June 1941. These underline in-depth and repeatedly confirmed findings. A whole series of indicators for the preparation of military actions/offensive against Germany was elucidated March to June 1941: O The elucidation of the Red Army land forces The enormous 1941 recognized increase of the total number of the Red Army from 200 on 01 January 1941 (Document IV.25 ) to 237 calculation divisions on June 18, 1941 (Document V.168), of which in the European part of the USSR from 161.5 to 201.5 calculation divisions, a high massing of these in the border military districts, especially their concentration in the bridgeheads of Bialystok and Lviv (Document V.150 and excerpt.), extraordinarily favorable for the opening of offensive actions, made an imminent transition of the Red Army to the offensive seem certain. Many other signals from mid-May and in June 1941, for example: Strikingly heavy radio traffic in the networks of the Western and Kiev Special Military Districts and westward movement of radio networks, troop movements toward the Bialystok and Lviv bridgeheads, the reconnaissance of a large number of previously unidentified divisions (e.g. also in Uzbek), the detection of strong mobile groups/offensive groups near the border, the warnings of the commander of the fog troops, the creation of a war psychosis, as evidenced by the instruction of Riga troop units about a war with Germany, radio communications in English, etc., the offensive of the Red Army is imminent. The documents presented in this study, especially clear in the situation map of the Army High Command of June 11, 1941 (Document V.150) illustrate the dangerous concentration of enormous forces of the Red Army in offensive formation of the Western Special Military District (the later Western Front) in the frontal salient of Bialystok. O The reconnaissance of the air forces of the Red Army The already since the communication of the Foreign Armies East of 09. September 1940 (Document III.79) assumed the existence of the air forces of the Red Army with 12,000 to 14,000 aircraft, the actual reconnaissance results of the Foreign Air Forces East in cooperation with the listening troops of 10,500 aircraft, including 7,500 in the European part of the USSR. As proof of the offensive intentions, the establishment of a border grouping of the Red Army Air Forces (Document IV.69), which had begun early in 1940, and its structure, consisting of 28 air divisions with 136 air squadrons, could be reconnoitered as early as the beginning of January 1941. Through reconnaissance of constantly new radio networks by the listening troops, as well as through aerial photography, the further densification of the grouping of air forces in the immediate vicinity of the border, which could only be judged as an offensive grouping, was reported in recent weeks. The development of long-range bomber forces, whose range of 1,500 km could permit bombing of Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Belgrade, or Sofia, was recognized as particularly dangerous. The abolition of decentralized subordination and grouping of long-range bomber forces to perform strategic tasks in the depth of enemy territory was also noted. □ The reconnaissance of the peripheral threat situation The recognized situation on the southern flank (border with Romania) and its preparation for defense in the event of a Russian attack is evidenced by documents V. 144 and 155 of 07 and 10 June 1941. It showed the highest danger for Ploesti and thus for

a reliable and for the Wehrmacht war-important oil supply. The situation on the northern flank opposite Finland and for Petsamo was judged no less dangerous. 2 The Actions of the Wehrmacht Although a number of facts that we know today were not known to German reconnaissance because, as it seems to the author, there was no leak in Stalin's inner circle and the Russians let the ambassador and the German military attaches go empty-handed, nevertheless all reconnaissance documents prove the increasingly alarming situation in the East. In view of the previous experience with Stalin's policy, the geostrategic westward expansion of the USSR during the Winter War against Finland, the occupation of the Baltic States, Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina, the unreasonable demands set forth by Molotov on November 12/13, 1940, up to a so-called. The above-mentioned constantly escalating deployment of the Red Army's land and air forces on the borders of East Prussia and the Generalgouvernement was understood as a serious threat and as a sign of an imminent offensive. As the reconnaissance documents and many diary notes prove, Hitler, the high commands of the Wehrmacht and the Wehrmacht components were continuously fully informed about the escalating situation development in the east and on the flanks, which showed all the characteristics of an imminent offensive, even if this point in time could not yet be precisely foreseen. As early as March 1941, the Wehrmacht/Halder received clearer pictures of the grouping of forces of the Red Army, the strong massing on the Russian western border, about their deployment in the front and in depth. Halder, in view of the worsening situation, even contemplated a request to the Luftwaffe for the destruction and interruption of the Russian advance (quote V.l). This note of Halder's may be dismissed as a mental game.

no preparations were made by the Luftwaffe, but this note alone proves that Halder correctly assessed the seriousness of the developing situation in the east. While the deployment of the Army divisions according to the deployment order Barbarossa of 31 January 1941 (document FV.77) began in the III decade of

February 1941 and was carried out in 5 stages, detailed planning at the level of the Army groups/tank groups, as the deployment order Barbarossa of Panzer Group 3 of 12 March 1941 (document V.9 ), it was not until mid-March 1941 that the necessary planning documents (of land fortifications (Document V.12), roads and bridges (Document V.13), the river network (Document V.15 ) and the defense economy (document V.16)) of the USSR, which, however, rather give the impression of a collection of old data compiled in a time crunch, took place very late in March 1941. Also the requests for urgently needed aerial photographs of the border strip for the planning process, here selected as an example by Army High Command 17 (Army Group B) dated March 16, 1941 (document V.24 ), since the existing ones dated from May 1940 and were outdated, is an indication that a longer-term plan of an attack on the Soviet Union was not in place. On March 16, 1941, Halder (quote V29) considered it quite possible that the Russian side could forestall the German attack by strikes at sea or from the air against Finland and/or Romania. Also in the Operative Department of the Army High Command at its consultation of March 21, 1941 (Document V.41), there was talk of serious fears in anticipation of a Russian attack, which, in view of the balance of forces in the east, could by no means be ruled out any longer. Even Halder had to state, "We face the Russian extraordinarily weak." (quote V.43). The numerical ratio shown in sketch V.44 proves the situation developing extraordinarily favorably for Stalin's plans. The reconnaissance results available in the High Command of the Wehrmacht/Heeres proved the enormous aggravation of the situation in the East in the I decade as in the course of the whole month of April 1941. Keitel's directive of 03 April 1941 (Document V52) announced the postponement of Barbarossa by at least 4 weeks, but at the same time instructed, in view of the recognized danger threatening the situation in the East, to strengthen the defensive precautions against possible actions of the Red Army from the air or on the ground. Halder's notes of 06 April 1941 (citation V.55), an attack against Hungary and Bukovina, and of 07 April (citation V.56), that "... the Russian Gliederungsehrwohl makes possible a

rapid transition to attack," prove the very serious fears in the Army High Command. The statement made by Jodi on 07 April 1941 "...questionable attitude of Russia..." inevitably led to the consideration of immediately setting the maximum power schedule for the deployment for Barbarossa. However, this was rejected by Hitler on 10 April 1941, apparently, as the directive also states of Army Group B (Document V.57), on the grounds that "...as long as Russia's attitude does not compel other measures." Although just in the month of April 1941 a whole series of disturbing reports about the march of the Red Army came in, Halder in his Führer lecture on April 30, 1941 (citation V.99) had to reject any necessary attempt to accelerate the march of the Wehrmacht in the East with the remark "acceleration not possible for transport reasons and because of the necessity of refreshment". It is obvious that, among other things, Kinzel's report of April 26, 1941 (quote V.98) "Red Army at war strength" and "increase in the West by 10 divisions" led to the consideration of accelerating the Wehrmacht's march. In the end, Halder's proposed specification of further deployment characteristics (expiration of Squadrons 3, 4a, and 4b) had to be approved by Hitler. In the meeting note of the Chief of the Wehrmacht Joint Staff of 01 May 1941 (Document V.105) with Finnish representatives, the latter assumed an offensive intention discernible by the massing of the Russian Army on the German-Russian border, in order to be able to anticipate the Russian intention by attack in this case, a realization that was also tested above all by Finnish reconnaissance. It is not credible that the Chief of the Wehrmacht Joint Staff would have come up with arguments that would have contradicted the findings of the Finnish reconnaissance as well. The full dangerousness of the situation developing in the east was made clear to the Army High Command by the force summary (Document V.114) of the deployment of Wehrmacht units in the east of May 12, 1941. The 72 divisions provided in the East at that time, including 2 armored divisions, were opposed by 194 divisions (Document V.123) of the Red Army in the European part of the Soviet Union, according to the information provided by Fremden Heere Ost. The author believes that there is a connection between the insufficient force deployment of the Wehrmacht in the East, which was by no means sufficient to repel a sudden attack of the Red Army, and Hitler's letter to Stalin of May 14, 1941 (citation V.115), which probably had the goal of achieving a postponement of the Red Army's attack, since the majority of the panzer divisions were to be moved only by Aufmarschstaffel 4b. from June 01, 1941, and an acceleration of the deployment 1t. Halder should not have been possible. In the end, the reports to the Foreign Office presented on 19 June 1941 (Document V.176), which cover a period from 13 January to 20 June 1941 and which correspond to reality, even if they were made after the fact, prove the constant high level of information of the Wehrmacht about the offensive preparations of the Red Army. Also, the last findings of the Horchdienst leave no room for doubt. The deployment for the opening of the Red Army offensive into Germany was nearing completion. The Russian offensive was expected within a few days, at the latest in the first decade of July 1941. All reconnaissance results in the first half of 1941 confirmed Hitler's distrust of Stalin. Not only the Red Army marched up in a state of readiness for war and the air forces concentrated in an offensive grouping near the border, but also Stalin's attempts to disrupt the flanks in Scandinavia (Finland; Petsamo) and in the Balkans (Romania/Ploesti; Yugoslavia) were directly directed against Germany. The highly suspicious collusion of American, British and Russian intelligence services in carrying out the overthrow of the pro-German government in Yugoslavia on March 25, 1941, already forced Hitler to occupy Yugoslavia as well in carrying out "Marita." Many other indications (raid on the harbor of Svolvaer/Norway, Stalin's constantly more aggressive demands on Finland, etc.) pointed to an alliance of the Soviet Union with England already before the beginning of Barbarossa, as evidenced by Halder's remark ([interaction] England-Russia)"(quote V.37). 3 Stalin's Expectations, His View of a Third Window of Opportunity to Open the Offensive at the Moment the Wehrmacht Landed in England Stalin's conviction that Hitler, who as a soldier of World War I rejected a two-front war, would land in England in the near future was

not only nourished by Hitler's letter of May 14, 1941 (Quote V.1 15), but also found its confirmation in the albeit contradictory reports of the Administration Reconnaissance of the General Staff of the Red Army. The following account of the reconnaissance reports (Table V203) of the Administration Reconnaissance of the General Staff of the Red Army established an equal distribution of the number of German divisions for the fight against England and the stationing of divisions in East Prussia and in the General Government against the USSR as late as May 31 and June 15, 1941. On the basis of the distribution list of messages it is proved that Stalin, Molotov, Voroshilov, Timoshenko, Zhukov and others also received these reconnaissance messages. Other reports, which were spread in the course of the strategic operation of the Wehrmacht for disinformation and became known to Stalin, such as the concentration of almost all airborne divisions of the Wehrmacht in the West, confirmed him in his opinion. In accordance with Lenin's doctrine that the offensive must be opened when the enemy's forces are maximally distributed, Stalin believed the time had come for the planned offensive into Germany. The following comparison of the two sides presents the situation that Stalin faced after receiving Hitler's letter in May/June 1941. By the Russian reconnaissance on The number of Stalin known for the 31 May and on 15 June 1941 offensive against Germany planned determined number of German divisions of the Red Army divisions on the border with the Soviet Union (according to Table V203). Considering that a considerable part of the number of 120-122 Wehrmacht units reported to Stalin was still to be withdrawn according to Hitler's fictitious announcement of 14 May 1941 for the landing in England, originally 39 divisions (Document 111.92) were planned for "Sea Lion," in this case only possibly 80 divisions of the Wehrmacht might still be available for a defense of Germany in East Prussia and the Generalgouvernement, and Stalin's resolve becomes clear. In view of this military-political situation, which was becoming extraordinarily favorable for Stalin

Stalin now initiated the final phase for the immediate preparation and execution of the offensive into Germany, the reconnaissance results of which, reconnoitered by Germany and available to Hitler and the Wehrmacht leadership, are presented in the above chapters.